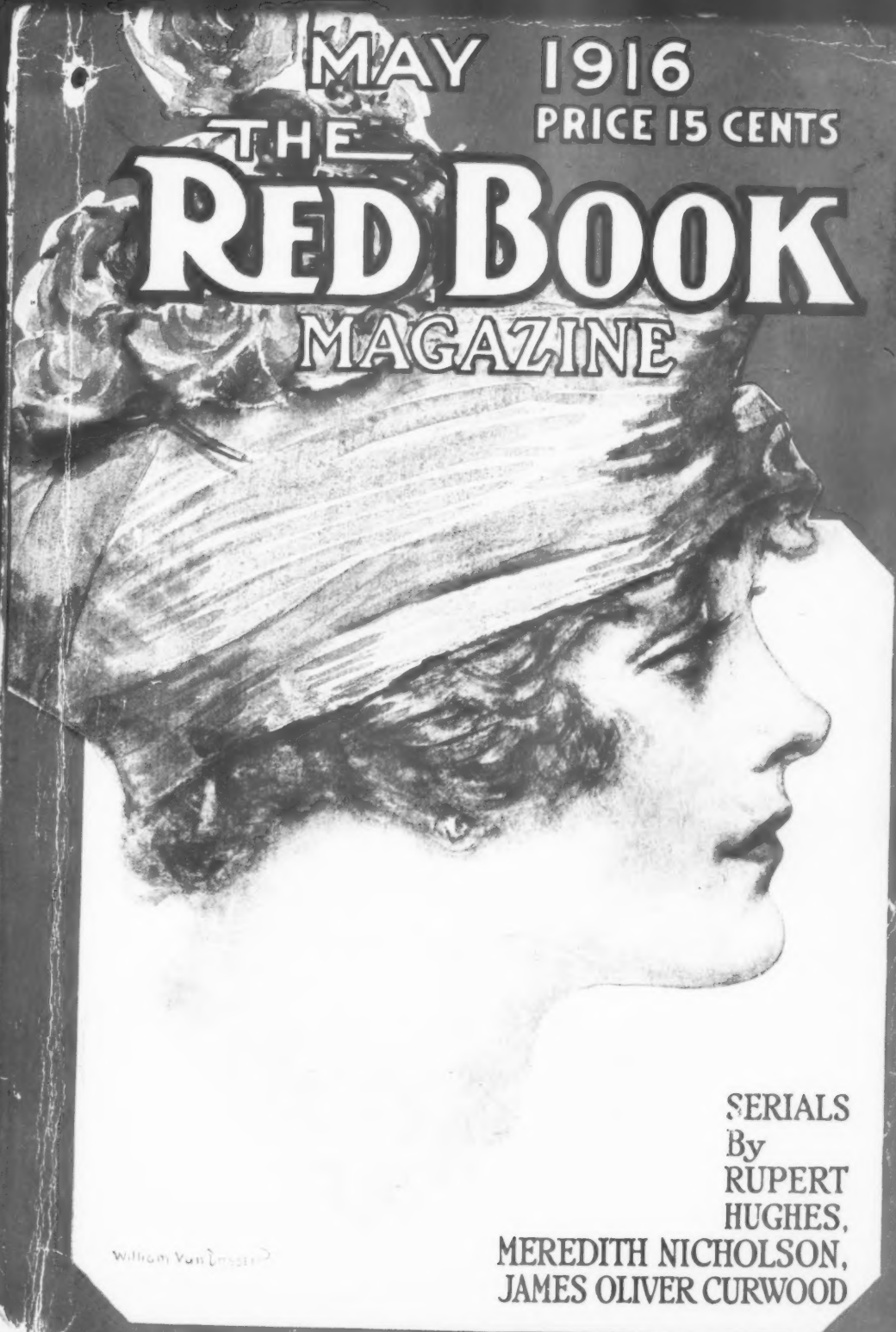


MAY 1916

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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE



SERIALS
By
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The Romance of Mac's
by PELHAM GRENVILLE WODEHOUSE



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- | | | |
|--|--|------------|
| The Romance of "Mac's" ----- | By Pelham Grenville Wodehouse ----- | 17 |
| The first of several short stories the brilliant author of "Something New" has written for The Red Book. | | |
| Plato! Plato! ----- | By Holworthy Hall ----- | 29 |
| A love-story by the author of "The Road House" and "Perfectly Fair Rivals." | | |
| The Frame-up ----- | By Harris Dickson ----- | 41 |
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| An Evening of "Tosca" ----- | By Edith Macvane ----- | 98 |
| An American girl, studying for grand opera, gets her big chance—and faces a crisis. | | |
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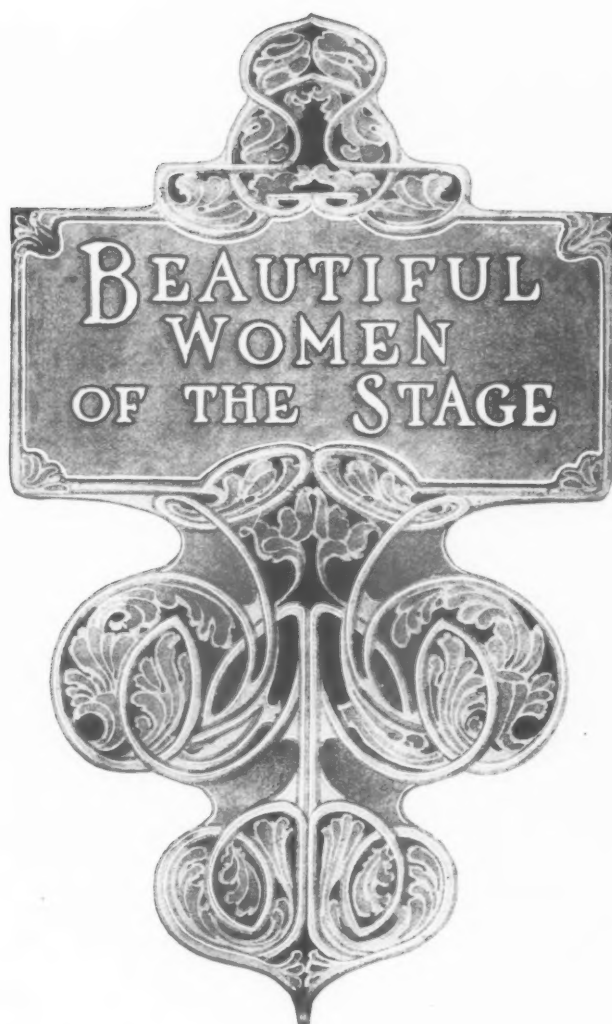
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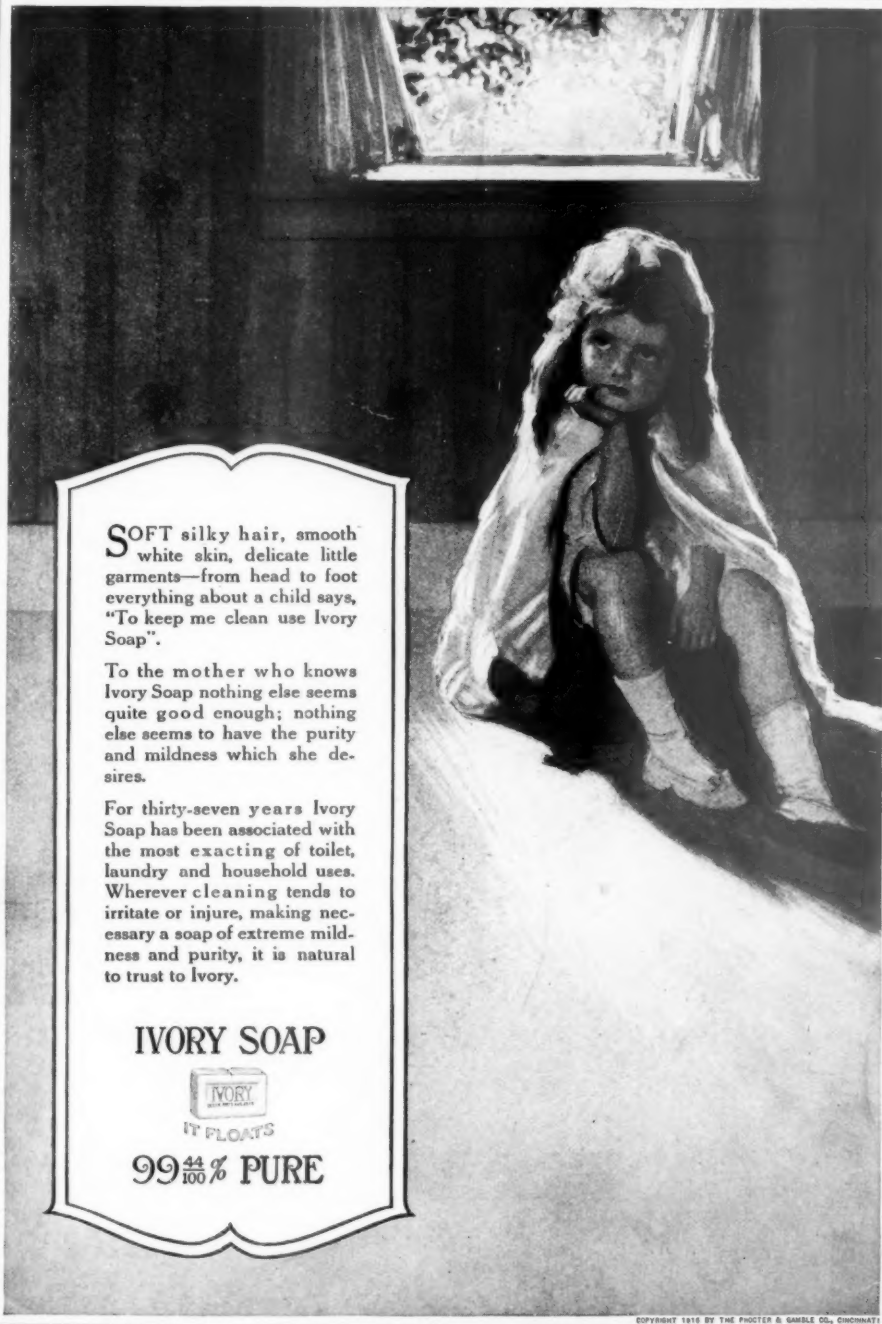
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May -
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THE
RED BOOK
MAGAZINE

Vol. XXVII
No. 1 - -

RAY LONG, Editor

The Romance Of "Mac's"

IT was the story of a young man with a bull dog
jaw and a girl with dance music in her heart.

By Pelham Grenville Wodehouse

Author of "Something New," etc.

MAC'S restaurant
—nobody calls
it MacFarland's
—is a mystery.

It is off the beaten track; it is not smart; it does not advertise; it provides nothing nearer to a cabaret than a solitary piano; yet, with all these things against it, it is a success. In theatrical circles, especially, it holds a position which might turn the white lights of many a lobster-palace green with envy.

This is mysterious. You do not expect Seventh Avenue to compete with and even eclipse Times Square in this way. And when Seventh Avenue does so compete, there is generally romance of some kind somewhere in the background.

Somebody happened to mention to me casually that Henry, the old waiter, had been at Mac's since its foundation.

"Me?" said Henry, questioned during a slack spell in the afternoon. "Sure I have."

ILLUSTRATED BY
RICHARD CULTER



Henry,
the waiter,
who told the
story to Mr.
Wodehouse.

"Then can you tell me what it was that first gave the place an impetus? What causes should you say were responsible for its phenomenal prosperity? What—"

"What put it on the map? Is that what you're trying to get at?"

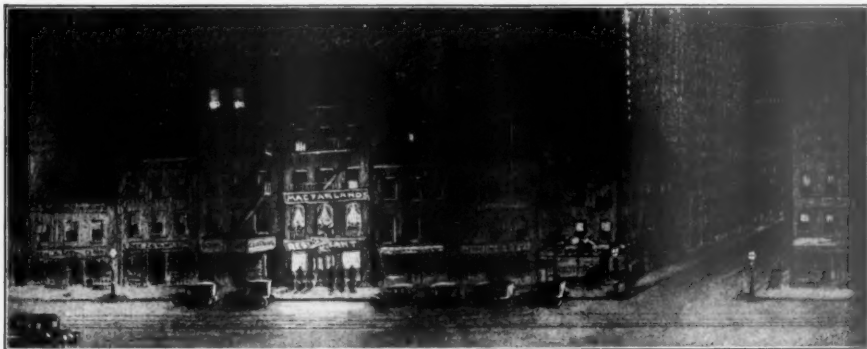
"Exactly. What put it on the map? Can you tell me?"

"Me?" said Henry. "Sure I can."

And he told me this chapter from the unwritten history of the New York whose day begins when Nature's finishes.

OLD man MacFarland (said Henry) started the place fifteen years ago. He was a widower with one son and what you might call half a daughter. That's to say, he had adopted her. Katie was her name, and she was the child of a friend of his, dead. The son's name was Andy. A little freckled mutt he was when I first knew him, one of

"MAC'S" restaurant was on Seventh Avenue, off the beaten track for New Yorkers, and yet it was a success. To Mr. Wodehouse this suggested romance. He sought the answer—and found his instinct had led him aright.



those silent kids that don't say much and have as much obstinacy in them as if they were army mules. Many's the time, in them days, I've clumped him on the head and told him to do something; and he didn't run yelling to his pop, as most kids would have done, but just said nothing and went on not doing whatever it was I had told him to do. That was the sort of disposition Andy had, and it grew on him. Gee, when he came back from college the time the old man sent for him,—what I'm going to tell you about soon,—he had a jaw on him like the ram of a battleship.

Katie was the kid for my money. I liked Katie; we all liked Katie.

Old man MacFarland started out with two big advantages. One was Jules, and the other was me. Jules came from Paris, and he was the greatest little cook you ever seen. And me—well, I was just come from ten years as waiter at the Aureata on Fifth Avenue, and I wont conceal it from you that I gave the place a tone. I gave Seventh Avenue something to think about over its corned-beef hash, believe me. It was a come-down in the world for me, maybe, after the Aureata, but what I said to myself was that, when you get a tip on Seventh Avenue, it may be only a nickel but you keep it; whereas on Fifth Avenue about ninety-nine hundredths of it

goes to helping maintain some stiff of a head waiter in the style to which he has been accustomed. It was through my kind of harping on that fact that me and the Aureata parted company. The head waiter kicked to the management the day I called him a fat-headed vampire.

Well, what with me and what with Jules, MacFarland's—it wasn't Mac's in them days—began to get a move on. Old man MacFarland, who knew a good man when he saw one and always treated me more like a brother than a hired help, used to say to me: "Henry, if this keeps up, I'll be able to send the boy to college." Until one day he changed it to: "Henry, I'm going to send the boy to college." And next year, sure enough, off Andy went.

Katie was sixteen then, and she had just been given the cashier job, as a treat. She wanted to do something to help the old man, so he put her on a high chair behind a wire cage with a hole in it, and she gave the customers their change. And I want to say right here, mister, that a man that wasn't satisfied after he'd had me serve him a dinner cooked by Jules and then had a chat with Katie through the wire cage, would have beefed at Paradise. For she was mighty easy to look at, was Katie, and getting easier every day. I spoke to the boss

THIS story is the first of several Pelham Grenville Wodehouse has written for Red Book readers. Another will appear in the next—the June—issue. "A Very Shy Gentleman" is a story as unusual as his now-famous "Something New."



about it. I said it was putting temptation in the girl's way to set her up there right in the public eye, as it were. And he told me to chase myself. So I chased myself.

Katie was crazy about dancing. Nobody knew it till later; but all this while, it turned out, she was attending one of them schools regular. That was where she went to in the afternoons when we all thought she was visiting girl friends. It all come out after, but she had us fooled then. Girls are like monkeys when it comes to artfulness.

She called me Uncle Bill, because she said the name Henry always reminded her of cold mutton. If it had been young Andy that had 've said it, I'd clumped him one; but he never said anything like that. Come to think of it, he never said anything much at all. He just thought a heap without opening his head.

So young Andy went off to college, and I said to him: "Come along, now, you young buster, you show some pep and be a credit to us, or I'll bust your head when you come home." And Katie said: "Oh, Andy, I *shall* miss you." And Andy didn't say nothing to me, and he didn't say nothing to Katie, but he give her a look, and later in the day I found her crying, and she said she'd got toothache, and I went

round the corner to the drug-store and bought her something for it.

It was in the middle of Andy's second year at college that the old man had the stroke which put him out of business. He went down under it as if he'd been hit with an ax, and the doc' tells him he'll never be able to leave his bed again.

So they sent for Andy, and he quit his college and come back to New York to look after the restaurant.

I was sorry for the kid. I told him so in a fatherly kind of way. And he just looks at me and says: "Thanks very much, Henry."

"What must be, must be," I says. "Maybe it's all for the best. Maybe it's better you're here than in among all those young devils at New Haven who might be leading you astray."

"If you would think less of me and more of your work, Henry," he says, "maybe that gentleman over there wouldn't have to holler sixteen times for the waiter."

Which, on looking into it, I found to be the case, and the customer went away without giving me no tip, which shows what you lose in a hard world by being sympathetic.

I'M bound to say that young Andy showed us all mighty quick that he hadn't come home just to be an orna-

ment around the place. There was exactly one boss in the joint, and it was Andy. It came a little hard at first to have to be respectful to a kid whose head you had spent many a happy hour in clumping for his own good in the past; but he pretty soon showed me I could do it if I tried, and I done it. As for Jules and the two young fellers that had been taken on to help me, owing to increase of business, they would jump through hoops and roll over if he just looked at them. He was a boy who liked his own way, was Andy, and believe me, at MacFarland's restaurant he got it.

And then, when things had settled down into a steady jog, Katie broke loose.

She done it quite quiet and unexpected one afternoon when there was only me and her and Andy in the place. And I don't think either of them knew I was there, for I was taking it easy on a chair at the back, reading a baseball extra.

She said, kind of quiet: "Oh, Andy."

"Yes, darling," he said.

And that was the first I knew that there was anything between them.

"Andy, I've something to tell you."

"What is it?"

She kind of hesitated.

"Andy dear, I sha'n't be able to help any more in the restaurant."

He looked at her, sort of surprised.

"What do you mean?"

"I'm—I'm going on the stage."

I put down my baseball extra. What do you mean—did I listen? Of course I listened. What do you take me for?

From where I sat I could see young Andy's face, and I didn't need any more to tell me there was going to be trouble. That jaw of his was right out. I forgot to tell you that the old man had died, poor old feller, maybe six months before, so that now Andy was the real boss instead of just acting boss; and what's more, in the nature of things, he was, in a manner of speaking, Katie's guardian, with a license to tell her what she could do and what she couldn't. And I felt that Katie wasn't going to have any smooth passage with this stage business which she was handing out. Andy didn't hold with the stage—not with any girl he was fond of, being on it, anyway.

And when Andy didn't like a thing, he said so.

He said so now.

"You aren't going to do anything of the sort."

"Don't be horrid about it, Andy dear. I've got a big chance. Why should you be horrid about it?"

"I'm not going to argue about it. You don't go."

"But it's such a big chance. And I've been working for it for years."

"How do you mean, working for it?"

And then it come out about this dancing-school she'd been attending regular.

When she'd finished telling him about it, he just shoved out his jaw another inch.

"You aren't going on the stage."

"But it's such a chance. I saw Mr. Mandelbaum yesterday, and he saw me dance, and he was very pleased, and said he would give me a solo dance to do in this new piece he's putting on."

"You aren't going on the stage."

What I always say is, you can't beat tact. If you're smooth and tactful, you can get folks to do 'most anything you want; but if you just shove your jaw out at them, and order them about, why then they come back at you, quick and sassy. I knew Katie well enough to know that she would do anything for Andy, if he asked her properly; but she wasn't going to stand for this sort of thing. But you couldn't drive that into the head of a feller like young Andy, with a steam-hammer.

She flared up quick, as if she couldn't hold herself in no longer.

"I certainly am," she said.

"You know what it means?"

"What does it mean?"

"The end of—everything."

She kind of blinked, as if he'd hit her; then she come back at him.

"Very well," she says. "Good-by."

"Good-by," says Andy, the pig-headed young mule; and she walks out one way and he walks out another.

I DON'T follow the drama much as a general rule, but seeing that it was now, so to speak, in the family, I did keep an eye open for the newspaper notices of "The Rose Girl," which was the

name of the piece which Mr. Mandelbaum was letting Katie do a solo dance in; and while some of them roasted the play considerable, they all gave Katie a boost. All of them praised her, and one guy said that she was like ice-water on the morning after, which is high praise, coming from a newspaper man.

There wasn't a thing to it. She had landed. You see, she was something new, and Broadway always sits up and takes notice when you give it that.

There were pictures of her in the papers, and one evening paper had a piece about "How I Preserve My Youth," signed by her. I cut it out and showed it to Andy.

He gave it the once-over. Then he gave me the once-over, and I didn't like the look in his eye.

"Well?" he says.

"Pardon?" I says.

"What about it?" he says.

"I don't know," I says.

"Get back to your work," he says.

I got back.

It was that same night that the queer thing happened.

We didn't do much in the supper line at MacFarland's as a rule in them days, but we kept open, of course, in case Seventh Avenue should take it into its head to treat itself to a Welsh rabbit before going to bed; so all hands was on deck, ready for the call if it should come, at half-past eleven that night; but we weren't what you might term sanguine.

Well, just on the half-hour, up drives a taxicab, and in comes a party of four. There was a feller, another feller, a girl, and another girl. And the second girl was Katie.

"Hello, Uncle Bill," she says.

"Good evening, madam," I says dignified, being on duty.

"Oh, stop it, Uncle Bill," she says.

"Say 'Hello!' to a pal, like a regular guy, or I'll tell them about the time you cut loose at Coney."

Well, there's some bygoness that are best left bygoness, and the night at Coney what she was alluding to was one of them. I still maintain, as I always shall maintain, that the cop had no right to—but there, it's a story that wouldn't in-

terest you. And anyway, I was real glad to see Katie again, so I cracked a smile.

"Keep it under your hat," I says. "I'm mighty pleased to see you, Katie."

"Bully for you. Say, people, I want you to meet my friend Uncle Bill. Jimmy—Ted—this is Uncle Bill. Genevieve, this is Uncle Bill."

It wasn't my place to fetch her one on the side of the head, but I'd've liked to have; for she was acting like she'd never used to act when I knew her, all tough and sassy. Then it come to me that she was nervous. And natural, too, seeing young Andy might pop out any moment.

And sure enough, out he popped from the back room at that very instant. Katie looked at him, and he looked at Katie, and I seen his face get kind of hard; but he didn't say a word. And presently he went out again.

I heard Katie breathe the sort of deep.

"He's looking natural, Uncle Bill, aint he?" she says to me, very soft.

"Pretty fair," I says. "Say k.d, I been reading the pieces in the papers. You've hit 'em."

"Ah, don't, Bill," she says, as if I'd hurt her. And me meaning only to say the civil thing. You can't figure girls out.

When the party had paid their check and give me a tip which made me think I was back on Fifth again,—only there weren't any Jesse James of a head waiter standing by to hold me up for his,—they beat it. But Katie hung back, and had a word with me.

"He was looking natural, wasn't he, Uncle Bill?"

"Sure."

"Dôes—does he ever speak of me?"

"I aint heard him."

"I guess he's still pretty sore at me, isn't he, Uncle Bill? You're sure you've never heard him speak of me?"

So, to cheer her up, I tell her about the piece in the paper I showed him; but it didn't seem to cheer her up any. And she goes out.

The very next night, in she come again for supper, but with different fellers and different girls. There was six of them this time, counting her. And they'd hardly sat down at their table



■ The young feller at the piano struck up the tune what Katie danced to in the show. Catchy tune it
 ■ and hammering on the tables and hollering to Katie to get up and dance. Which she
 ■ Andy. He goes up to her, all jaw, and says to her, very quiet:



was. *Lum-tum-tum, tiddle-iddle-um*; something like that, it went. And everybody began clapping done, in an open space in the middle; and she hadn't hardly started when along come "You can't do that here. What do you think this place is?"

when in come the fellers she had called Jimmy and Ted, with two girls. And they sat eating of their suppers and joshing one another across the floor, all as pleasant and sociable as you please.

"Say, Katie," I heard one of the fellers say, "you were right. He's worth the price of admission."

I don't know who they meant, but they all laughed. And every now and again I'd hear them praising the eats, which I don't wonder at, for Jules had certainly shown a flash of speed. All artistic temperament, these Frenchmen are. The moment I told him we had company, so to speak, he blossomed like a flower does when you put it in water.

"Ah, see, at last," he says, trying to clinch and kiss me, "our fame has gone abroad in the world which amuses himself, aint it? For a good supper connection I have always prayed, and he has arrived."

Well, it did begin to look as if he was right. Ten high-class supper-folk in an evening was going some for MacFarland's. I'm bound to say I got worked up myself. I can't deny that I missed the Aureata at times.

On the fifth night, when the place was fairly packed and looked for all the world like a real Lobster Square joint, and me and the two young fellers helping me was working to beat the band, I suddenly got onto it; and I went up to Katie and, bending over her very respectful with a bottle, I whispers: "Great work, kid. This is sure one swell boom you're working for the old place." And by the way she smiled back at me, I seen I had the right dope.

Andy was hanging around, keeping an eye on things as he always did, and I says to him, when I was passing: "She's doing us well, aint she!" And he says "Get on with your work." And I got on.

Katie hung back at the door, when she was on her way out, and had a word with me.

"Has he said anything about me, Uncle Bill?"

"Not a word," I says.

And she goes out.

You've probably noticed about New York, mister, that a flock of sheep isn't

in it with the spenders, the way they all troop on each other's heels to supper places. One month they're all going to one joint, next month to another. Some one with a pull starts the cry that he's found a new place, and off they all go to try it. The trouble with most of the places is that, once they've got the custom, they think it's going to keep on coming and all they've got to do is to lean back and watch it come. Popularity comes in at the door, and good food and good service flies out at the window. We wasn't going to have any of that at MacFarland's. Even if it hadn't been that Andy would have come down like half a ton of lead on the first sign of slackness, Jules and me both of us had our professional reputations to keep up. I didn't put on no frills when I seen things coming our way. I worked all the harder, and I seen to it that the four young fellers under me—there was four now—trotted quick heats with the customers' orders.

The consequence was that the difference between us and most popular restaurants was that we kept our popularity. We fed them well, and we served them well; and once the thing had started rolling, it didn't stop. Seventh Avenue isn't so very far away from Broadway, when you come to look at it; and they didn't mind the extra step, seeing that there was something good at the end of it. So we got our popularity, and we kept our popularity; and we've got it to this day. That's how MacFarland's came to be put on the map, mister.

WITH the air of one who has told a well-rounded tale, Henry ceased, and observed that it was wonderful the way Mr. Matthewson, of the New York Giants, preserved his skill in spite of his advanced years.

I stared at him.

"But heavens, man," I cried, "you surely don't think you've finished? What about Katie and Andy? What happened to them? Did they ever come together again?"

"Oh—ah," said Henry. "I was forgetting."

And he resumed.

AS time went on, I begin to get pretty sore with young Andy. He was making a fortune as fast as any feller could out of the sudden boom in the supper-custom, and he knowing perfectly well that, if it hadn't 've been for Katie, there wouldn't 've been any supper-custom at all; and you'd 've thought that anyone claiming to be a human being would have had the gratitood to can the rough stuff and go over and say a civil word to Katie when she come in. But no, he just hung around looking black at all of them; and one night he goes and puts the lid on it.

The place was full one night, and Katie was there, and the piano going, and everybody enjoying themselves, when the young feller at the piano struck up the tune what Katie danced to in the show. Catchy tune it was. *Lum-tum-tum, tiddle-iddle-um*; something like that, it went. Well, the young feller struck up with it, and everybody began clapping and hammering on the tables and hollering to Katie to get up and dance. Which she done, in an open space in the middle; and she hadn't hardly started when along come Andy.

He goes up to her, all jaw, and I seen something that wanted dusting on the table next to 'em, so I went up and began dusting it, so by good luck I happened to hear the whole thing.

He says to her, very quiet: "You can't do that here. What do you think this place is?"

And she says to him: "Oh, Andy!"

"I'm very much obliged to you," he says, "for all the trouble you seem to be taking, but it isn't necessary. Mac-Farland's got on very well before your well-meant effort to turn it into a joint."

And him coining the money from the supper-custom! Sometimes I think gratitood's a thing of the past and this world not fit for a self-respecting rattlesnake to live in.

"Andy!" she says.

"That's all. We needn't argue about it. If you want to come here and eat, I can't stop you. But I'm not going to have the place turned into a Hay-market."

I don't know when I've heard any-

thing so raw. If it hadn't 've been that I hadn't the nerve, I'd have give him a look.

Katie didn't say another word, but just went back to her table.

But the episode, as they say, wasn't concluded. As soon as the party she was with seen that she was through dancing, they begin to kick; and one young feller with about an inch and a quarter of forehead and the same amount of chin, kicked special.

"No, I say! I say, you know!" he hollered. "That's too bad, you know. Encore! Don't stop. Encore!"

Andy goes up to him.

"I must ask you please not to make so much noise," he says, quite respectful. "You are disturbing people."

"Disturbing be blamed! Why—"

"One moment. You can make all the noise you please out on the street, but as long as you stay in here you'll be quiet. Do you understand?"

Up jumps the feller. He'd had quite enough to drink, I know, because I'd been serving him.

"Who the devil are you?" he says.

"Sit down," says Andy.

And the young feller took a crack at him. And the next moment Andy had him by the collar and was bouncing him in a way that would have done credit to a real professional in a Bowery joint. He dumped him on the sidewalk as neat as you please.

That broke up the party.

You can never tell with restaurants. What kills one makes another. I've no doubt that, if we had bounced a good customer from the Aureata, that would have been the end of the place. But it only seemed to do MacFarland's good. I guess it gave just that touch to the place which made the spenders think that this was real Bohemia. Come to think of it, it does give a kind of charm to a place if you feel that at any moment the feller at the next table to you may be gathered up by the slack of his pants and slung into Seventh Avenue.

Anyway, that's the way our supper-custom seemed to look at it; and after that you had to book a table in advance if you wanted to eat with us. They fairly flocked to the place.

But Katie didn't. She didn't flock. She stayed away. And no wonder, after Andy behaving so raw. I'd have spoke to him about it, only he wasn't the kind of feller you do speak to about things.

So we saw no more of her, and if Andy was pleased he didn't show it. He became silenter than ever.

One day I says to him, to cheer him up: "Some restaurant, this, now, Mr. Andy."

"Hang the restaurant!" he says.

And him with all that supper-custom. Can you beat it!

MISTER, have you ever had a real shock—something that came out of nowhere and just knocked you flat? I have, and I'm going to tell you about it.

When a man gets to be my age, and has a job of work which keeps him busy till it's time for him to go to bed, he gets into the habit of not doing much worrying about anything that aint shoved right under his nose. That's why, about now, Katie had kind of slipped my mind. It wasn't that I wasn't fond of the kid, but I'd got so much to think about, what with having four young fellers under me and things being in such a rush at the restaurant, that if I thought of her at all, I just took it for granted that she was making out all right, and didn't bother. To be sure, we hadn't seen nothing of her at MacFarland's since the night when Andy give her the call-down and bounced her pal with the small size in foreheads, but that didn't worry me any. If I'd been her, I'd have stopped away the same as she done, seeing that young Andy still had his grouch. I took it for granted, as I'm telling you, that she was all right, and that the reason we didn't see nothing of her was that she was taking her patronage elsewhere.

And then, one evening, which happened to be my evening off, I got her letter, and for ten minutes after I read it I was down and out.

You get to believe in Fate when you get to be my age, and Fate had sure taken a hand in this game. If it hadn't 've been my evening off, don't you see, I wouldn't 've gotten home till two

o'clock or past that in the morning, being on duty. Whereas, seeing it was my evening off, I was back at half-past eight.

I was living at the same rooming-house on Second Avenue what I'd lived at for the past ten years, and when I got there, I find her letter shoved half under my door.

I can tell you every word of it. This is how it went:

"Darling Uncle Bill," it says. "Don't be too sorry when you read this. It is nobody's fault, but I am just tired of everything, and I want to end it all. You have been such a dear to me always that I want you to be good to me now. I should not like Andy to know the truth, so I want you to make it seem as if it had happened naturally. You will do this for me, wont you? It will be quite easy. By the time you get this, it will be half-past two, and it will all be over, and you can just come up and open the window and let the gas out and then everyone will think I just died naturally. It will be quite easy. I am leaving the door unlocked so that you can get in. I am in the room just above yours. I took it yesterday, so as to be near you. Good-by, Uncle Bill. You will do it for me, wont you? I don't want Andy to know what it really was."

And it was signed, "Katie."

That was it, mister, and I tell you it had me down and out. And then it come to me, kind of as a new idea, that it was up to me to get busy, and up the stairs I went quick.

There she was, on the bed, with her eyes closed, and the gas just beginning to get bad.

As I come in, she jumped up and stood staring at me. I went to the tap and turned the flow off, and then I gives her a look.

"Now then," I says.

"How did you get here?"

"Never mind how I got here? What have you got to say for yourself?"

She just began to cry, same as she used to when she was a kid and some one had hurt her.

"Here," I says, "let's get along out of here, and go where there's some air to breathe. Don't you take on so. You



Andy, he didn't say nothing. He just looked, and she just looked. And then he sort of stumbles across the room, and goes down on his knees, and gets his arms around her. "Oh, my darling!" he says.



come along out and tell me all about it."

She started to walk to where I was, and suddenly I seen she was limping. So I give her a hand down to my room, and set her on a chair.

"Now then," I says again.

"Don't be angry with me, Uncle Bill," she says.

"Don't you worry, honey," I says. "Nobody aint going to be angry with you. But for the love of Mike," I says, "tell a man why in the name of goodness you ever took and acted so foolish."

"I wanted to end it all."

"Sure. But why?"

She burst out a-crying again, like a kid.

"Didn't you read about it in the paper, Uncle Bill?"

"Read about what in the paper?"

"My accident. I broke my ankle at rehearsal ever so long ago, practicing my new dance. The doctor says it will never be right again. I shall never be able to dance any more. I shall always limp. And when I thought of that—and Andy—and everything—I—"

I got onto my feet.

"Kid," I says, "you sure were up against it, and I don't know as I blame you for wanting to make a quick finish. But I shouldn't, if I were you. It's a chump's game. See here: if I leave you alone for half an hour, you wont go trying it on again? Promise."

"Very well, Uncle Bill. Where are you going?"

"Oh, just out. I'll be back soon."

IT didn't take me ten minutes to make the restaurant in a cab. I found Andy in the back room.

"What's the matter, Henry?" he says.

"Take a look at this," I says.

There's always this risk, mister, in being the Andy type of feller what must have his own way and goes straight ahead and has it; and that is that, when he does get his, he gets it good and hard. It sometimes seems to me that in this life we've all got to get ours sooner or later, and some of us gets it bit by bit, spread out thin, so to speak, and a few of us gets it in a lump, *biff*! And that

was what happened to Andy, and what I reckoned was going to happen when I shown him that letter.

I don't often go to the theater, but when I do, I like one of those plays with some pep to them, which the papers generally roast. The papers say that real human beings don't carry on in that way. Take it from me, mister, they do. I seen a feller on the stage read a letter once which didn't hit him just right, and he gasped and rolled his eyes and tried to say something and couldn't, and had to get a hold on a chair to keep him from falling. There was a piece in the paper saying that this was all wrong, and that he wouldn't 've pulled them stunts in real life. Believe me, the paper was wrong. There wasn't a thing that that feller did that Andy didn't do when he read that letter.

"God!" he says. "Is she—she isn't—were you in time?"

And he looks at me, and I seen that he had got what was coming to him.

"If you mean, is she dead," I says, "no, she aint dead."

"Thank God!"

And the next moment we was out of that room and in the cab.

He was never much of a talker, was Andy, and he sure didn't chat in that cab. He didn't say a word till we was going up the stairs.

"Where?" he says.

"Here," I says.

And I opens the door.

Katie was standing looking out of the window. She turned as the door opened, and then she saw Andy. Her lips parted, as if she was going to say something, but she didn't say nothing. And Andy, he didn't say nothing neither. He just looked, and she just looked.

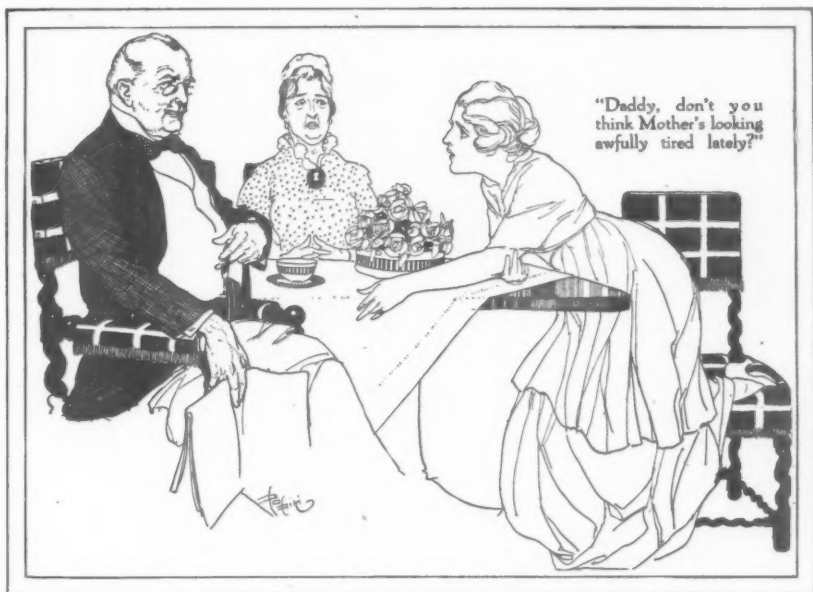
And then he sort of stumbles across the room, and goes down on his knees, and gets his arms around her.

"Oh, my darling!" he says.

And I seen I wasn't wanted, so I shut the door, and I beat it. I went and took in the last half of a vaudeville show. But I don't know—it didn't kind of have no fascination for me. You gotta give your mind to it, to appreciate good vaudeville.

Next month: "A Very Shy Gentleman," by Pelham Grenville Wodehouse.

ALL the world loves a lover. Holworthy Hall not only loves him, but he understands him. That's why his love stories are so popular.



Plato! Plato!

By Holworthy Hall

Author of "The Road House," "Perfectly Fair Rivals," etc.

WHEN Billy Stewart was twenty-three, he inherited an estate consisting of six acres of land just beyond the limits of the R. F. D., and five hundred shares of stock in the Greenwood Paper Company, which was controlled by New York capital, and paid eight per cent.

Before the end of the year, Billy was resident secretary of the company; he was engaged to Priscilla Page, the daintiest and most adorable of all the girls of Greenwood; he was planning a Colonial house in the country, and he had built a Colonial garage to use for storage-room until the house was finished.

ILLUSTRATED
BY A. POPINI

Then the New York capitalists glanced over the general situation, agreed on a startling change of base, decided to suspend the production of super-calendered paper, and, with hardly more than a fortnight's notice, shut down the Greenwood plant, and made no promise for the future.

When the smoke cleared away, and Billy had converted his motor and other assets into real money, he found himself possessed of a few hundred dollars in cash, a temporary clerkship in the National Bank, a handsome garage which nobody wanted, and a fiancée accustomed to everything she could think of wanting.

His first definite announcement was

that the engagement was broken; and the second was that he intended to go to live in the garage.

"Billy," said his friend Maxwell, with serious concern, "you're an idiot on both counts!"

Billy grinned with intent to appear cheerful.

"Personally, I don't see it," he murmured. "I can't very well be married on eighteen dollars a week; and as for the rest of it. . . . I can't either sell my lot or trade it, and I've got fourteen hundred in the garage already, so it would be ridiculous to pay rent anywhere else—and you've got to remember that it isn't a regular garage, anyway. Upstairs there's three rooms we meant for the servants' quarters; there's light, and water; and the downstairs wont make a half bad living-room. And the trolley runs right past the gate. . . . What's the matter with it?"

"It sounds like the dream of a rare-bit fiend! If you'd just swallow a little of your confounded pride, you wouldn't have to make this so hard for Priscilla, and—"

"Cut it!" commanded Billy. "Of course I know what you've heard. . . . it's true, all right. . . . Colonel Page offered to take me into partnership with him. Think it over! The bank thinks I'm worth eighteen a week, and the Colonel offered me a junior partnership at five thousand a year. . . . and he'd finance the house, too. He's a good old scout. . . . bless his hide! . . . but I'm not going to be supported by my father-in-law, and don't you forget it!"

"Or if you'd come into the Knitwear Company—"

"Don't!" said Billy. "That's out of the question. . . . but you're a mighty good friend, just the same. . . . I suppose I'm behind the times, but the idea of getting myself endowed by the Colonel—or by you—doesn't listen well. I want to *earn* my money! If I can't take care of Mrs. Stewart on what I can earn, or get out of my paper stock, there wont be any Mrs. Stewart, that's all!"

"It seems to me," thought Maxwell, "that if I had a girl like Priscilla waiting for me, I'd do pretty nearly anything, short of burglary—"

"Well, I *will*—but taking money from you or the Colonel would be burglary and larceny and charity—and you know as well as I do that if I went into your office I'd only be in your way. You don't need me—if we weren't friends, you'd pay me to keep out!"

"If you'd only stop to think of the other side of it," implored Maxwell, who, as a very recent benedict, was proselyting for the Cause, "you'd *see*—"

"If Pinkie's the girl I picked out," said Billy, "I guess she wouldn't be very proud of having her father adopt me! Don't argue, old top—it only makes me feel worse. I'm not going to be a bank clerk all my life. In three or four or five years I ought to be on my feet—and there's a chance of the mill starting up again any time—and in the meantime I can live out on my ancestral acres without paying any rent."

"To put it politely," said Maxwell, "if you only had a little more sense, you'd be half-witted!"

THAT was what a number of Greenwood residents thought about it. They thought that Billy should have adopted any one of a number of courses other than the one he did. Unmoved, however, by the weight of public opinion, he withdrew from society as gracefully as he could, took his belongings out to the country, joked about it as a fresh-air cure, and proceeded to be a bank clerk. The young men were sorry for him, and showed it; and the girls were much sorrier for Priscilla, and they showed that.

Priscilla herself was uncommunicative. The entire town knew that Billy, and not she, had broken the engagement; and that he had done it in justice to her; and the town regarded Billy as a very fine gentleman at the same time that it conceded him no other alternative.

Only Priscilla's closest friends knew that she was still willing to accept his hand and his garage, and to live on something less than her present dressing allowance; and that she was rather hurt and indignant because Billy couldn't see it that way; but after she and her mother had spent a few mornings in an attempt to humanize Billy's domain, and with

her own hands she had planted four little maple trees before his door, it became obvious to all Greenwood that Pinkie Page was what Greenwood had always appraised her, and that she was going to be philosophical about it.

Those who had liked Billy as a youngster of fortune liked him even better as a bank clerk. He didn't grumble; he didn't shirk; he didn't blame his luck; he merely went about his business in a wholesomely happy fashion, and took part in the diversions of his set whenever he could afford them. He had resigned from the Country Club, of course; but he still went to all the incidental dances, and even to one or two of the subscription series. He was in constant demand for dinners and out-of-door frivolities; and in the last week of May he repaid his social obligations with a motor dance in his own garage.

As a function, it was one degree beyond the superlative. The men came, by request, in chauffeurs' livery, and the girls in housemaids' costume. They found the walls of Billy's living-room festooned with tire-chains and inner tubes and spare shoes and miscellaneous accessories borrowed from local dealers; and they beheld in one corner a small and dilapidated runabout—also borrowed—in which sat the orchestra, three colored gentlemen who toiled in the Iron Works all day, and played the banjo all night. Small kegs labeled "Oil," and "Gasoline," topped with seat-cushions, were ranged about for resting-places. Electric searchlights provided the illumination—and they were thoughtfully dimmed between dances. When, at eleven o'clock, the blowing of an asthmatic horn from outside summoned the guests to the door, they saw Greenwood's big-gest motor-truck coming down the driveway; and in rapturous delight they assisted in unloading the refreshments destined for their own use....freezers of ice-cream, and cakes in the shape of wheels, with the spokes picked out in icing. There was also a small packing-box which proved to contain the favors....monkey wrenches for the men, and motor veils for the girls; and a pair of dark goggles for Mrs. Page, who had received for Billy.

CATEGORICALLY, it was the most successful affair of the season. It was novel, and pleasurable; and at no similar entertainment had it been possible to sit out a dance in any location comparable to the stone wall on which Billy and Miss Page sat out the fourteenth.

Miss Page was especially enthusiastic in her praise of his ingenuity.

"Billy," she declared, "you're a peach!"

"Thank you," he acknowledged. "It hasn't been a flivver after all, has it?"

"Nobody else would ever have thought up a party like this."

"No credit to me—it was the only kind I could give. But I'm not ashamed of it."

"That's just it—you're so sweet about it. That's what makes it a real party."

"Well," said Billy, "just because I can't afford anything better, there's no use of being sour, is there?"

She crept a little closer to him, and put out her hand.

"Billy....what do you really see in me?"

"Why," said Billy, readily enough, "you're a little bit of a pink angel....and you're about the most precious thing in the whole world....and you're the prettiest girl I've ever seen....and the nicest....I guess that'll give you an inkling of what I see, wont it?"

She tightened her grip on his arm.

"Billy dear....the way you've taken your punishment makes me care infinitely more....aren't you ever going to say nice things to me again, or....or kiss me....or...."

"Not the last part," said Billy flatly.

"You're n-not?"

"Not yet awhile." He swung his feet against the wall, and smiled at a sudden burst of laughter from the garage. The orchestra was playing "Memphis Blues" and some one was syncopating it with the horn of the runabout. "You see, Pinkie," he explained, "I can't see the use of letting this accident spoil our lives—or the littlest part of them. I'm just as crazy about you as I ever was....more....but we can't possibly be married....and it wouldn't be fair to be engaged....we'd only torture our-



On the form was a gown, which Helen surveyed with lively interest. "Good night!" she exclaimed. "It's your first shot at dressmaking, and you tackled a party dress!"

selves for years and years, maybe..... so I figured out that we'd better just consider ourselves Platonic friends. If you find somebody you like better than me, you take him! It wouldn't be decent of me to bind you by a promise until I make good. And at the same time, if I'm to keep my eyes in the boat, and not lose my head, I can't be too demonstrative.....if I should kiss you about once more, I'm afraid I'd fire all my common sense into the ash-heap, and let you marry me! For Pete's sake.....*behave!* It isn't easy for me, either....."

"Billy! I can't be Platonic friends with you! And I'd marry you on *eight* dollars a week!"

"No, dear, you wouldn't! I wouldn't let you! Why, you dear little girl, you've

been brought up on an income twenty times mine! You'd do your best, but literally I couldn't afford to pay for your mistakes! It isn't your fault.....you've never had to do anything but look sweet, and dance well, and be as adorable as you *are*.....but we'd better stick to Plato....."

"If Daddy took you—"

He held up a warning hand.

"I'm going to fight this out all by myself—and in the end you'll like me better for it. And.....would you be offended if I asked you something? Please.....*please* take your hand away from my arm!"

"Let's go in!" said Priscilla quickly.

"I don't like it out here very much. If I stay any longer, I think I'll c-cry!"

"You poor little kid!" said Billy, in sudden contrition.

"I'm *not* a poor little kid—I don't *want* you to talk to me like that! That's just the trouble. . . . Please help me down, Billy. I want to go in and dance now."

He lifted her down; and together they crossed the site once selected for their house; and in the middle of it Priscilla sniffed ominously. They went on toward the four tiny maples, where the girl paused, and stopped to examine them.

"I hope you look at these once in a while. . . ."

"Every morning, and every night."

"Look down here. . . ." She shot a hasty glance at the open doorway, put both her arms around his neck, and kissed him. "There!" said Priscilla tremulously. "Now let's go in!"

II

FROM long study and experience, Priscilla knew that the proper time to approach her father on any subject of importance, was immediately after breakfast, provided that he had partaken of it. So, although she was nearly bursting with impatience, she waited until the Colonel had finished his second cup of A Good Substitute for Coffee, and was fumbling in his waistcoat pocket for a cigar.

"Daddy," said Priscilla, resting both elbows on the table, and leaning as far towards him as she conveniently could, "don't you think Mother's looking awfully tired lately?"

"No, I hadn't noticed it," said the Colonel, looking at his wife in some apprehension.

"Nonsense! I never felt better in my life," said Mrs. Page.

"Well, it seemed to me that she ought to be, even if she isn't, so I wondered why she didn't have a long rest, and let me look after things."

"What things?"

"The whole house—don't laugh at me, please."

The Colonel dropped ashes in his saucer, and hastily concealed them with his cup.

"Don't you bother about the house, Pinkie," he told her affectionately. "Go ahead and have a good time while you're young. When you're old, you can't."

"Please be serious—I mean it. . . . here I haven't anything to do but sit around; and Mother's so tied down she can't see anybody, or go anywhere—"

"Your father needs a vacation much more than I do," said Mrs. Page. "Besides, there are countless ways you can help me, if you care to, without assuming any responsibility—"

"But that's just *it*. . . . Daddy and Mother, I'm twenty-one years old,—twenty-one years old,—and I've never ordered a meal, or written a check! What am I doing? What *can* I do? I couldn't fry an egg to save my life! I can't do *anything*! And I'm sick of it. . . . I want to do something *vital*. . . ."

"As I remember it, there are a number of very worthy charities in town—"

"Oh, don't! Don't you see what I mean? Either of you?"

They shook their heads solemnly.

"I want to run the house," said Pinkie; and she looked so small and dainty, and so hopelessly unlike any other housekeeper, that both her parents smiled, to her evident discomfiture. "Well, I do!" she said stoutly. "Try to look at it *my* way. . . . not yours. . . . for just a second! I haven't any place here. . . ."

"You mustn't say that," reproved her mother. "You ought to consider yourself a very fortunate girl indeed—"

"You wouldn't say that about a boy, would you? You'd give him a good, hard job and *train* him for something, wouldn't you? And then you expect me to be happy just sitting around, and taking money from Daddy. . . . And I was going to be married. . . ." She bit her lip; and her parents stirred uncomfortably. "I'd have been a nice wife, wouldn't I?"

"You can always help your mother," began the Colonel.

"But I don't want to *help*! I didn't say I wanted to be a servant! . . . I want to know all about everything, and make mistakes, and have responsibility. . . . I don't think it's *fair* to treat girls the way you do! You seem to think the

one business we've got in life is to hang around until we're married—"

"Priscilla!"

"And here's a chance for me to save Mother a lot of worry and energy, and for me not to feel so terribly, terribly *dependent*! For some girls it might be all right. . . . It's making *me* humiliated."

"But, dearie, you haven't had any experience!" said her mother gently.

"That's like telling me not to go near the water until I can swim! Mother, dearest, *how* can I get experience if I don't just go *get* it?"

"This is beyond me," said the Colonel. "Do you mean that you want the financial responsibility, too?"

"All of it. . . .if I had a brother, would you have let him grow to be twenty-one years old, and not know any more than I do? Of course you wouldn't!"

"That's different," said Mrs. Page conservatively.

"Not a bit."

"A man has to earn his living—"

"And don't you think *I* do?"

"But you don't have to!"

"I think so."

"This isn't getting anywhere," interposed the Colonel. "The way I look at it is simply this: it would be a dead loss or inefficiency if you have the desire to be active, and don't get the chance. Whether you're active in the house or out of it is another matter—you talk it over with Mother this morning, and see if you can come to an understanding. If you can, telephone me that you're serious about it, I'll bring you home some of my own system. We'll let it rest there for the present."

AT noon she telephoned; and so that night he brought her an armful of books, and two corporation files; and after a short interview with Mrs. Page, he invited Priscilla to the library, and delivered his lecture.

"Of course you know," he said, "that this is only an experiment. . . .and we've all jumped at it without giving it much consideration. But Mother says that you do really need an occupation; and I've known you long enough to

realize that you'll never be a good assistant—you've got to be left to your own resources. So you can practice on us. . . .I never thought you felt as strongly as you do about these things. . . .but that's neither here nor there. Mother's going to take a vacation, and you're to be business manager of the house. It'll be important for you to know a good many things that aren't particularly connected with houses. Now, your mother has done wonderfully well all these years, but there are some little modern kinks she's never solved. I want you to begin *right*. I'm delighted that you want to begin at all. The very first principle is here. . . .to learn how to keep these." He showed her the books.

"Those!" said Priscilla weakly.

"Exactly. This one is a general summary of all your accounts. . . .under the proper heads. . . ."

"What's a proper head?"

"Each day," he patiently told her, "you enter in the *Received* column all the moneys you receive, and in the *Disbursed* column, all the moneys you disburse. Then in the proper line, under Butcher, or Grocer, or Lighting, or Dairy, as the case may be, you set down the amount. I'm starting you with three hundred dollars for a household account. We'll take up the elements of banking in a few minutes. . . .but here in this book, the difference between the total disbursed and the total received, subtracted from your original capital, leaves at any time the cash on hand. It's very simple, isn't it? Like a-b-c. You can prove it up any time."

"I can!" she said limply.

"You surely can."

"But. . . .I hate mathematics!"

"Arithmetic is the first thing in business or in housekeeping," said the Colonel. "If I had a son, I certainly shouldn't let him into my office until he could at least add up a column of figures—why should I trust you with the managership of a whole house unless you're willing to work? I never could get your mother to keep books, but, as I said, I want you to start *right*."

"And. . . .and have I got to write down things every day in those little chutes? Why. . . .my writing's *twice*

too big!" She thought of Billy Stewart, and the economical standard which his future wife must follow. "G-go ahead," said Priscilla firmly. "Show me the whole.... mess!"

III

IN the living-room of the Page home two girls sat busily engaged in altruistic labor. Helen Jameson, who was knitting for the Belgians, occupied only the divan; while Priscilla, who was casting up her July accounts, utilized a table, two chairs, the piano stool, and occasional stretches of Oriental rug, where bills and vouchers and canceled checks fluttered in the breeze like the Sibyl's leaves.

"There!" said Miss Jameson, holding her work up for inspection. "That's the last sock I ever knit! After this I'm going to knit wristlets!"

"The feet do look sort of....generous," conceded Priscilla, frowning at her recapitulation.

"The encyclopedia says the Belgians average five feet eight and a half..... so these socks will have to be for an extra large one," said the unabashed philanthropist. "And if he doesn't like 'em, he can use 'em for haversacks. What's *your* trouble?"

"A vacuum cleaner. I bought one last week, and I don't know whether to put it under Household Furniture, or Luxuries!"

"Give it up," said Helen promptly. "The only time I ever tried to keep track of expenses was in the back of a diary



I got for Christmas. Inside of two weeks I was so far behind my allowance I thought I'd better quit."

"Thirty dollars for ice!" gasped Priscilla. "Thirty dollars in one month for ice! Oh! It's in the wrong column. Well, I can't change it now.....I know! I'll charge all the ice bills to the butcher until I've made up the thirty. Now.....all there is left is to write a check for Anna, so she can buy some more gold teeth on her day out to-morrow, and then I'm through."

"You're pretty crafty with your ac-

counts, aren't you?" said Helen appreciatively. "I suppose you'll begin to make your own clothes next."

Priscilla accumulated an expression of vast unconcern.

"That's nothing much. Perhaps I can make 'em already."

"You can't!"

"Want to see?"

"Pinkie! You're not telling the truth!"

"Oh, very well," said Priscilla placidly. "Just as you say."

Miss Jameson started at the tone of mystery. She looked at Priscilla, made as though to speak, changed her mind, hesitated, and suddenly was struck by the full force of a revelation.

"Pinkie!" she breathed. "Honest to goodness! Are you learning to *cook*, too?"

Priscilla nodded, and under the scrutiny of her best friend she slowly developed a suspicious rosiness.

"Sure I am. . . . what of it?"

"And. . . . and *sew*?"

"There's nothing criminal in that, is there?"

"Then I know why!" cried Helen.

"Why. . . . why, you living *peach*!"

"Well—it's nothing to be ashamed of, is it?"

"Ashamed! I should say not! Pinkie, I think it's the finest thing I ever heard in my life!"

"I don't care," said Priscilla, her lips beginning to tremble. "It isn't such a lot to do. . . . but I had to start somewhere. And you don't need to stare like that, either. . . . we're Platonic friends, that's all. If you'll wait until I clear up this rubbish, I'll show you the. . . . the *awfullest* thing. . . . it's up in the attic."

"I'll help you," said Miss Jameson, and she obligingly got down on her knees, and assisted in the collection of the bills and vouchers and checks. Once her hand touched Priscilla's, and she squeezed it affectionately. "You're a corker, you are!" said Helen gruffly.

SHE ascended the stairs behind Priscilla, and so came to the attic, where in a dim corner stood a pathetically drooping dress-form, surrounded by a carpet of odds and ends. Tacked to the

nearest wall were pattern envelopes and illustrative diagrams. On the form was a gown, which Helen surveyed with lively interest.

"Good night!" she exclaimed incredulously. "It's your first shot at dressmaking, and you tackled a party dress! Put it on. . . . I can't tell much about it on that tipsy-looking thing."

Two minutes later Priscilla, clad in her own handiwork, stood before her friend, and gyrated. The gown was of pink chiffon over pink satin; and it was so fashioned that Priscilla presented the general appearance of an order of strawberry ice-cream protected by mosquito netting. The sheer fabric was drawn tightly across her chest, and bulged bag-like in the back; the sleeves imprisoned her slim young arms with perilous stricture; in front, a large expanse of pink underskirt was clearly visible; behind, the chiffon swept the floor in unsupported grandeur.

"How long did it take you to make it?" demanded Helen.

"Three weeks—I had to work up here—I didn't want anybody to know about it until it was done. Isn't it awful?"

"It *averages* all right!" said Helen hysterically.

"As a dressmaker, I'll have to admit I'm a pretty good cook. . . . what *is* the matter with it? You can tell better than I can."

"I should say that you'd better let it down in front, and take a tuck in the back panel, and shirr it across so it won't stick out so."

Priscilla was torn between admiration and envy of her cleverness.

"But I can't. . . . I've got to wear it to-morrow night."

"Where?"

"Right here."

"Do you mean to say you're giving a party, and didn't ask me?"

"Oh, no, dear. . . . just somebody coming to dinner."

"Billy?"

"Of course." Priscilla wriggled uncomfortably, causing one shoulder of the dress to slip gently south, and the other to draw into the neck.

"Thought you said it's Anna's day out?"

"I did—it is."

Helen sat down on an old trunk, and palpitated.

"Now I've got it!" she exclaimed. "Dinner you've cooked yourself, dress you made yourself, household accounts all straight. . . . and yet you don't believe in suffrage!"

"And I'm going to wear this dress, no matter *what* it looks like!" said Priscilla grimly. "You haven't anything to do, have you? Well, stay here and watch me."

"I'm not much good, Pinkie, but I'll help all I can. . . . and I'm *grand* at shirring."

"No, thank you!" Priscilla's smile was heavy with resolution. "I'm going to do every stitch of it myself. But you can sit and criticise. . . . and for heaven's sake, tell me everything funny you can think of! I need it!"

IV

WHEN Billy Stewart dropped his hat on a chair in the hall, and passed on into the living-room, he found the Colonel and Mrs. Page seated on opposite sides of the center-table, in attitudes denoting great attention, some pleasure, and considerable nervousness. He wasn't long in doubt of the reason; for hardly had he confirmed the state of the weather, and confessed to his accustomed health, when Priscilla appeared on the threshold. She was clad in a pink party dress, over which she wore an apron more costly than the dress. Her face was flushed with pride, and her eyes danced excitedly.

"Dinner is served!" she announced.

The Pages looked at Billy, who was staring stupefied at the apparition in the doorway. Priscilla, unable to contain her joy, emitted a subdued little whoop of exultation, and added: "And I cooked it myself! Come on in. . . . *hurry!*"

She floated ecstatically in advance; the others merely went into the dining-room, and sat down. Priscilla, opposite her father, rang a silver bell; and the upstairs maid, who, according to instructions, had been standing with one foot against the swinging door, promptly entered with the soup.

"This dinner," said Mrs. Page to Billy, "is absolutely Priscilla's. She did every bit of it herself. I don't even know what we're going to have."

"It's good soup," complimented Billy in all sincerity. "It's a first-class beginning, Pinkie." He regarded her with deep appreciation.

After the soup came a roast of lamb, extraordinarily well-done here and there; and roast potatoes surrounded by an impenetrable armor of scorched skin.

"If you do 'em with the skins on," explained Priscilla graciously, "you retain all the natural flavor of the tuberous vegetable, and at the same time preserve intact the health-giving nitrogenous elements. That's what the book says. . . . but. . . . it looks as though I might have had 'em not *quite* so tough, and let some of the proteid out!"

"They're very delicious," commented the Colonel, touching one with his fork. The potato retreated shyly, and the Colonel pursued it around his plate until he succeeded in cornering it with a knife, and accomplished its destruction.

"They're bully!" said Billy. "But these peas are what get *me*."

He ate some, and then drank plentifully of water. Then he continued to drink at short intervals. The Colonel and Mrs. Page, observing the embarrassment writ large upon the countenance of their daughter, marched steadily through a conversation somewhat more fluent than philosophical.

There came a salad of lettuce and endive, which the three martyrs ate eagerly, and praised with exceeding praise. Then the dessert: a mucilaginous substance surmounted by Alpine stretches of froth, and tasting faintly of lemon. Finally there was coffee.

AFTER dinner, and congratulations to the hostess, they sat on the lawn, counting the young men who went past, and foretelling with great accuracy their respective destinations. At nine o'clock the Colonel professed a desire for driving, and showed no astonishment when only his wife was inclined to accompany him. So, in the course of a few minutes, Billy and Priscilla were left alone under the towering maples of the front lawn.

"You haven't said one word about my dress," charged Priscilla. "Don't you like it?"

"It's a dream! From Chicago?"

"No. . . . I made it myself."

"You didn't!"

She nodded affirmatively.

"Yes, I did!"

"Well, it's a wonder! And it fits you like the paper on the wall! Did you really do it yourself?"

Priscilla carefully moved one arm.

"I really did. . . . I'm awfully glad you like it."

"Like it! I think you're the cleverest girl I ever knew! I never imagined you could make clothes! And you did the dinner, too."

"But the soup was canned," she confessed humbly. "And that was the only thing that wasn't spoiled—"

"Canned, was it? Then canned soup is good enough for me."

"I put too much gelatine in the dessert. . . . you see, I'm so new at all this and I thought half a lemon ought to make it good and sour. . . ."

"The fuzzy part was splendid—and the lamb was great!"

"I don't know *why* it turned out that way," she mourned. "I tested the oven with a thermometer, and I left it in fifteen minutes to the pound, and then it was tougher than leather!"

"I never ate a great deal of leather; but if it all tastes like that, I'd be willing to get all my dinners in a tannery."

"Everything was fearful. . . . it's just my luck to have them turn out that way on the *one* night I wanted everything to be good."

"The wonder is that you tried it at all where'd you get the idea, anyway? What's the point?"

"Well. . . . you wouldn't ask a man the point of going to work, would you?"

"It isn't exactly the same thing, is it?"

"Why not? You're like everyone else, Billy. . . . you think a girl ought to sit around and do nothing. . . . and it hurts, Billy. . . . it hurts more than you'll ever understand. We haven't any job. . . . we aren't needed for anything. . . . and it gets tiresome and embarrassing to be a beggar in your own house. . . ."

"Pinkie!"

"Well, it's true! I was a very successful beggar, of course. I always got anything I asked for. But there wasn't any fun in it. . . . just take Christmas for an example! Wasn't it utterly ridiculous for me to have to ask Daddy for the money with which to buy him a present? And what I'm doing now is only a start, but it does make me feel a little bit more independent. . . ."

"But if all women feel that way," he demurred, "I shouldn't think your mother would let you take the work off her hands."

"Mother's fifty-two years old. . . . why shouldn't she be retired with an interest in the business?"

Billy shook his head.

"I'm not convinced of the logic, but I think you're a mighty unusual little girl."

Priscilla smiled sorrowfully.

"I never could make you believe how many girls there are right in this town who'd give *anything* if their fathers and mothers would stop treating them like charity patients—give them real work to do, and pay them real pay for it. Do you want to see how I manage? Come on in the house."

They went into the library, where a new desk stood between the windows.

"Card indexes," said Priscilla proudly.

"One for me, and one for the house. And these are miscellaneous files—they save lots of energy. See this. . . . every year when Mother wanted to remember where she'd put Daddy's fur gloves, she had to look through the cedar chest, and two or three other places, and pull out all the bundles and put them back—and here under *F*, I find a card that says his fur gloves and fur cap are in the package at the bottom left of the second drawer under the stairs. I know where every single thing in this house is, Billy. . . . and last year I used to buy rubbers and umbrellas by the *bale*. . . . when we had dozens of 'em around! Only of course you've got to keep things where they belong."

"How does the financial part work? By the way, I had the job of balancing your book a day or two ago. I want to tell you that not many women in town keep their records as straight as you do."

"That's nice. . . . well, these are plain,



ordinary ledger-cards. But Mother never kept any figures. And for an example, she took it for granted that Milliken was a good grocer because he was polite to her, and had a motor delivery wagon! Well, I kept tabs on him, and then I

Would you mind reading it to me, please?"

Priscilla, watching him, saw a sudden gleam in his eyes; saw his mouth curve into a beatific smile.

"All right. . . . Here! take an answer.

changed to Armbruster. And in one month I cut down the bills fifteen dollars, and had just as good food—"

"You," admired Billy, "are a regular manager, aren't you?"

"I'm learning."

"Is it as much fun as you thought it would be?"

"Not *fun* exactly—I don't suppose any business is real fun. It's interesting."

"That's how I find it. And by the way, they've raised me to twenty dollars." He grinned humorously. "I'm as tickled as a kid—and a few months ago I couldn't have bought a new shoe for the car on that!"

"Twenty dollars! You can do a *lot* on that!"

"You don't get much idea of money until you have to earn it, Pinkie."

"I don't know—saving it isn't so easy, when you come right down to it. And that's my ambition—"

The telephone on the desk rang sharply, and Priscilla took up the receiver.

"Why, yes," she said in surprise. "He's here. Hold the wire a moment." She turned to Billy. He took the instrument, and assumed the businesslike aspect of most telephoners of his sex. "Hello! . . . This is Mr. Stewart talking. . . . All right.

Ready? Same name, 5000 Broadway, New York. *Will accept gladly. Wire time of your arrival.* Signed, Stewart. That's all!"

HE hung up the receiver, and before Priscilla knew what was happening to her, she was in his arms. All the kisses of the barren months crystallized at that moment; and Priscilla, bewildered, enraptured, and faint from the unexpected violence of his affection, sobbed a little against his lips, and then was still. In the meantime, her gown ripped quietly under the arms; and the two pins which had held the back breadth even, detached themselves, and allowed a wealth of chiffon to depend loosely from her pretty shoulders.

"Sweetheart!" said Billy fiercely. "Want to be engaged again?"

"Oh.....yes!" faltered Priscilla. "That's what I was w-working for!"

"What?"

"You didn't think I was doing all this for *nothing*.....d-did you?"

"Pinkie.....!"

A muffled murmur told him little of her emotions.

"Pinkie, tell me! *What* were you doing it for? Tell me!"

He raised her face until it was very close to his; but she struggled against meeting his eyes.

"I.....I wanted to learn enough to.....to feel I had a right to live.....not to be just a p-parasite—"

"Yes?"

"And t-then.....if you never did ask me again, I wouldn't be a beggar any more.....and if you did ask me.....you couldn't say you couldn't afford to p-pay for my m-mistakes....."

They were silent so long that she was alarmed, even though he held her close.

"Does it make you think I'm a sufferette to.....to tell you that?" she whispered. "You'd have to work for me.....aren't you willing to have me work for you, too?"

"I don't know what to say....."

"I've read *so* many books on house-keeping, Billy—I know all the cheap cuts of meat—I tried 'em on the family, and sometimes they hardly knew the difference....."

"You're an angel!" he breathed into her hair.

"And I can keep accounts.....and I've saved a hundred and seventy dollars out of my household allowance.....and Daddy says I can have it for my trousseau....."

He kissed her very reverently.

"To-night was terrible.....I know.....but I wanted you to see me in a dress I'd made myself, and.....and to eat what I'd c-cooked myself.....so you'd know the worst....."

"It was wonderful, dear!"

"And if you can live in your garage, the two of us can do it, too....."

"But, sweetheart!" said Billy thickly.

"My telegram was from New York. They're either going to sell the paper property to a new syndicate, or start running again on full time in September! If they sell I'll get 110 for my stock—that's fifty-five thousand dollars!—and if they don't, I'll have my secretaryship back. One of the directors is coming out to see me.....it's staggering! Don't you understand? Don't you? We can build our house, sweetheart—"

"You can!" she stammered, withdrawing from him. "You *can*!"

"Of course I can! Aren't you glad?"

"And.....and I don't have to be poor?"

"No, dear.....you don't have to!"

She glanced at her card indexes, her rows of books, her fashion magazine, her account blanks. Then she laughed, but there were tears in her voice.

"I wish the darned old mill wouldn't do that....."

"Why, Pinkie! Don't you want to marry me?"

She fled straight to his embrace.

"Y-yes, but *anybody* can live in a house. Isn't there some way I can help you, Billy? That's what I want.....not to be just a w-woman hanging around."

Here an under-arm seam parted with a savage rip.

"In any way but dressmaking!" she excepted tartly.

"Pinkie!" he whispered against her lips.

"*Priscilla!*" cried her mother joyously from the doorway.

THERE'S one great disadvantage to using a woman in politics: No man—no matter how astute he may be in the psychology of his own game—can ever tell which way she may turn.

The Frame-Up

By Harris Dickson

Author of the "Old Reliable" stories.

A NEGRO, stealthy and duck-built, slunk through the black and silent night. Stumpy's short legs failed to reach the bottom of his long breeches. His coat lacked breadth of chest, but its flapping tail flirted with his calves—being Lawyer Crittenden's Prince Albert.

Stumpy clung to the shadows, and steered for that red lamp in the window of Mr. Robert Caruthers' cottage. On errands like this, for white folk, a negro had to behave mighty skittish. Cautiously he stepped from the street to a narrow porch. Stumpy felt sure that nobody saw him; but the door opened before he could knock. A pink and prudent lady peered out. Off came Stumpy's hat. "Jedge say he'll 'rive here at 'leven o'clock."

The prudent lady beckoned him closer. "Did anybody see you give the Judge my note?"

"Yas'm; but Jedge stuffed dat note in his pocket mighty brief, an' never said nothin'."

"Very well. Here's a dollar to shut your mouth."

Stumpy's mouth shut, fully a dollar's worth, and the door slammed. If he hadn't been such a flat-faced negro it would have caught his nose.

"Huh! Dat signifies fer me to git away." Stumpy believed in signs, and got away.

DOLLY HAWTHORNE turned back from the door, for Dolly had an affair. "At eleven. It's ten-fifteen now." Nodding her satisfaction, she crossed

ILLUSTRATED BY
F. R. GRUGER

the room with the flexible grace of a young panther. Yet, as a woman wholly feminine, she went to her mirror, and smiled at what it showed.

An exquisite pink gown clung softly to her shapeliness—a silken, sinuous mystery, despite its unselfish revelations of line and curve. No Bougureau Venus could rival her in rosy coloring, nor Greek Slave match her perfect symmetry. The painting was flat and the marble cold, when shamed by Dolly Hawthorne. She smiled at her own reflection, smiled with lips that were very red, and temptingly full of the primitive lure. Affectionately she stroked the yielding gown, and shook her head.

"I hate to spoil this dress; but it's all in the game."

Her figure stiffened. She could be resolute and steady. With careful deliberation Dolly tore away her upper left sleeve, wincing and frowning at the ruin. But she smiled again at the bare white shoulder and deliciously dimpled elbow. Once more her lips set in determination. Having begun the wreckage, she completed it, snatching strips from her throat, letting pink tatters hang and expose the filmy undergarments. All the while she kept smiling and nodding at the woman that she saw, a woman warm-blooded, glowing and desirable—facts of which no man could remain unconscious.

That's why Dolly Hawthorne had been imported from unknown space as temporary tenant of the Caruthers' cottage. That's why Dolly's eyes glittered with excitement. Nervously she con-

sulted the watch at her wrist—10:20—and ran to the window. Nobody was coming. She glided back to the mirror and removed the pins from her hair, all except two, leaving a tawny and precarious mass that was ready to topple. A light scarf lay on the sofa. This she wound about her shoulders to conceal the damaged dress.

At a sudden noise behind her, Dolly started and called out:

"Who's that?"

"Me. McGill." A man's voice came from the darkness of an adjoining bedroom.

"Oh! It's you. Come in."

Denny McGill had entered from the side street. He wore his hat cocked to one side and chewed vigorously upon an unlighted cigar. Critically he surveyed the woman. "Got your triggers set? Nearly half past ten."

"Yes, I'm ready. Judge Kirk comes at eleven. Does this look all right?"—drawing aside the scarf. "Does it look as though it were torn in a struggle?"

"Nobody couldn't tell the difference." The boss politician swaggered towards her. "That was a bully stunt you pulled off, keeping old Kirk beside you on that sofa in the hotel lobby."

"Yes, I thought it rather clever." She was trying to keep her hair from falling.

"You're a pippin; swapped your rose for his badge, and with all those people watching." McGill leered with an admiration not confined to Dolly's cleverness. She wound the concealing scarf about her shoulder.

"Oh! I forgot his campaign badge. I must wear that."

Dolly picked up a blue ribbon, stamped in gold, which she fastened to her dress: "E. B. Kirk, our next Governor. I'm for him, you know."

"We're all for him, and we'll get him," McGill chuckled. "Every man wanted to know 'Who's that peach of a woman talking to Judge Kirk?'"

"Did they say that?" Dolly was pleased, and showed it.

"Sure. Set those old sisters' tongues waggin' like a bell-clapper on a frisky mule. The minute we spring this in the newspapers they'll believe he was making a date."

"When do we spring it?" she inquired casually.

McGill checked himself. "That's where I get into the game."

"Oh, tell me. It's such fun." She seemed to be thawing.

"We'll swear out affidavits, and rush the trial to-morrow evening. That's a court proceeding, which protects the newspapers from libel suits."

"My! What a lot you do know."

"A fellow can't run politics for twenty years without having *something* in his head." McGill was making progress; he ventured to sit on the sofa, at the far end, edging over by degrees. Dolly was toying with her fan, and more approachable. "Are you sure Judge Kirk won't go to the wrong place?" she asked.

"No; he always visits here when he's in town. Him and Bob Caruthers is great friends. He don't know the Caruthers have moved. Bad scheme of mine, I reckon, to rent this house, furnished?"

Dolly nodded. "I described the house accurately—red lamp at the window—all in my note."

"Wrote him? Hell!" McGill bounded to his feet. "I thought you had some sense."

Composedly the woman kept her seat while McGill scowled down upon her.

"McGill, don't you dare speak to me like that. Besides, I signed Mrs. Caruthers' name."

"Where'll we be when he produces that note in court, and Mrs. Caruthers swears she never wrote it? See here, girlie—"

"Mrs. Hawthorne."

The boss looked ugly. "Actin' mighty swell for a lady in your line of business."

"I'm not in this business, and you know it."

McGill eyed her as he might have sized up a needy henchman. "You get that note, first. That's the word with the bark on it. No screamin' until you've got it. *And not a cent.*"

"Not a cent?" she coolly repeated, and got up, holding out her hand.

"Where's my five hundred, in advance?"

They were fronting each other, as



"Yes, I'm ready," she said. "Judge Kirk comes at eleven. Does the dress look all right?"—drawing aside the scarf.

man to man. With mustache bristling, and cigar uptilted, McGill tried his famous bluff, his stony-faced bluff. "Nixy five hundred. You've got us in bad at the start."

"Very well." Nonchalantly Dolly picked up her gloves and moved towards the bedroom. "This is all that belongs to me. I'm going."

The Honorable Dennis P. McGill had climbed through squally times to his present eminence, and maintained himself by keeping a clear head when other men went wild.

"Wait, Mrs. Hawthorne, wait; you aint goin' to jump us?"

"You've jumped me."

"I'll write you a check."

"Cash—now." Dolly turned back, held out her hand, and continued to hold it until she received.

"Five hundred. That's business. And one thousand *before* I am called upon to testify."

McGill made it a rule never to claim the pot after his bluff was called. "Sure Mike!" he assented cheerfully.

"Put it in business shape—a check."

"I don't give checks."

"You just offered one. Wasn't that on the square?"

"Two bad paymasters; one pays in advance, t'other don't pay at all."

"That balance will be due before the trial, to-morrow evening. And I want to *know* I'm going to get it."

McGill's jaw clamped tight; and the woman suggested: "Then I'll split the risk. Make your check for five hundred, and date it the day after to-morrow. . . . Oh, very well; I'm going."

"Hold on; he'll be here in a half hour."

"And find the house empty."

McGill hated to break rules, but pen and ink were handy—Dolly had seen to that. So he wrote and delivered, most amiably.

"Now, see here, girlie; you mustn't take this to the bank. I'll bring you the money."

Folding check and cash together, she tucked them into her bosom. "Certainly you'll bring the money. This check will be worth it."

For one doubtful moment, Denny's

big hands clenched, with half a notion to recapture the check. He weighed results. She would scream. It was very close to the street. Instead he laughed and turned away.

"Ten-thirty; I must get busy and round up those witnesses."

Dolly stopped him at the middle door. "Now tell me which one is to be Mr. Hawthorne."

"They'll rush in both doors when you scream. Only one man is due to come through this bedroom; he'll make the big holler about being your husband. But you get that note, first. No after-claps."

DENNY MCGILL was gone. Dolly threw off the scarf to take another look at her ruined dress. A foot struck the porch.

"Ten-thirty-five! That can't be—"

Somebody rapped at the door. Crouching, she ran to the window and peeped out. It was Judge Kirk. The crisis exhilarated her. Hurriedly adjusting her scarf, she opened the door. Dolly the Desirable stood radiant.

"Come in, Judge Kirk."

The Judge was manifestly surprised—and manifestly pleased. He was a slender man, trim, erect and gray, past middle years, but not safely beyond the age of adventure.

"My fair constituent!" he exclaimed. "How fortunate!"

Dolly laughed freely; her teeth were such a dazzling asset.

"You are still wearing my rose. Southerners are so gallant."

Judge Kirk glanced around the room. "Where's Julia, and Robert?"

"Are you disappointed?" she pouted. "There's no one here—except me."

"You didn't tell me you were visiting the Caruthers. Julia wrote urging me to drop in at eleven and see Robert. We hold a caucus at ten-thirty, and I cannot stay."

"Not one tiny little minute?" Such a pretty game, Dolly could not forbear to play it.

Judge Kirk fumbled in his pocket and took out her note. "No; Julia said to-night—at eleven."

Dolly came close to him with every

feminine appeal, eyes and rounded arms and glowing lips. "I am here, all alone, all alone." Her fingers were reaching for that important note.

If Judge Kirk had been a track-wise thoroughbred, horse sense would have warned him that a filly with so much white in her eyes would never stand hitched. As for himself, he was tied to the post of political expediency.

With hat in one hand, the other held Dolly's note behind him and felt for the doorknob. It now lacked twenty minutes to eleven.

Judge Kirk turned the knob. Dolly snatched the note, loosed her hair, flung away the scarf, twined both arms around his neck and screamed: "Let me go. Let me go."

"But, my dear young lady—"

"Help! Help!" Then Dolly listened. Nobody rushed in from the street. No husband appeared at her bedroom door.

"Help! Help!"

Rapid steps approached from the side street, entering at the door which McGill had conveniently left ajar. Out of the corner of her eye Dolly saw the expected witness standing on the threshold of her bedroom. She darted towards him with a cry.

"My husband! My husband!"

The witness—a slender, smooth-faced, very blond young man—forgot his lines, and stood bewildered. Dolly's instinct cautioned her not to cuddle in his arms and weep, as the touchingly dramatic scene had been planned. Again she gave him his cue.

"My husband! My husband!"

The witness was staring at Judge Kirk. The Judge stared back, and spoke: "William! You young scamp; what are you doing here?"

This seemed to galvanize the newcomer, who wore a "Kirk for Governor" badge. He rushed across the room. "Get out of here, Judge; quick."

"But, William, why—"

By main strength Will Austin shoved the candidate outside, himself remaining within. He wheeled to the woman. "What does this mean?"

Dolly held her tongue. Things were going wrong. A cog had slipped somewhere; talking would make it worse.

"How did this happen?" Young Austin spoke abruptly.

She stared at him. Plainly he was a blunderer, and not "in the know." Then—it was a novel sensation to Dolly Hawthorne, losing nerve. But she did. She ran.

Breathless and disheveled, Dolly reached her bedroom door, and there—confronted Denny McGill.

"What's the racket? Where is Judge—" McGill demanded, and shut up like a clam as he saw Will Austin step backward to the street.

Dolly flung herself upon the sofa in a passion. McGill strode to the woman and stood over her. "Made a fool of yourself again."

"I didn't. Judge Kirk came a half hour before the time. But he came."

"You had no witnesses. Your word against his; and he's got that note you were idiot enough to send."

"Idiot yourself. There's my note," she said, pointing to the table.

McGill saw an envelope lying under the red lamp. "Good! Destroy it, and forget how to write."

Dolly bounded up; her voice quivered with eagerness. "We have one witness."

"Who?"

"That young man who went out just as you came in."

"Witness for us? Hell! That's Will Austin—engaged to Judge Kirk's daughter."

Dolly shrugged her shoulders. "Don't blame it on me. I had him trapped, if you had only done your part and come on the scene."

Disgustingly McGill plumped himself down on the sofa beside her. "If this leaks out, he'll be elected, hands down."

There came a tap-tap-tapping at the street door.

"That's Snyder; come in," the boss growled like a sullen dog, then straightened up and shouted: "Get out o' here; get out."

Stumpy's bland black face appeared, an inky spatter against the white woodwork of the door. He looked surprised, and mightily hurt.

"'Scuse me, Mister McGill; I was seekin' fer Jedge Kirk. Lawyer Critten-



Dolly saw the expected witness standing on the threshold. She started



She darted towards him with a cry. "My husband! My husband!"

den tole me to give him dese letters."

"Leave 'em on the table."

Stumpy dropped several letters beside the one that Dolly had recovered. Then McGill thought of something else, and suggested smoothly: "Wait a minute, old man; you saw Judge Kirk come in here?"

"I aint zackly seed him come *in*; but he was proceedin' in dis direction. He comes here heap o' times."

DOLLY and McGill whispered together. They paid no more attention to the negro; so Stumpy gathered up his letters from the table, backed out, and softly closed the door.

"See here, girlie; how did young Austin happen to butt in?"

"Butt in? I thought he was one of your witnesses."

"No; he must have been passing, and heard the yell. I heard you—a mile." For a while McGill twisted his mustache, then sprang up suddenly: "Got an idea! Well! What do *you* want?" And he faced the door again.

Will Austin had reentered without formality.

"What do you want?" McGill repeated.

"That letter." Austin was already looking on the table. "I want that letter that was lying right here when I went out."

McGill and the woman glanced at each other; McGill moved nearer. "What sort of a letter?"

"Addressed to Judge E. B. Kirk, in a woman's hand." Austin bent over and was looking on the floor; then he rose aggressively. "Denny McGill, give up that letter."

"Haven't got it. Search me."

"Have you the letter?" Austin turned to Dolly. "I want to talk with you."

McGill shoved his belligerent mustache between them. "No use trying to hush this up. She'll talk a plenty in court."

"In court. You can't prove a thing," Austin retorted.

"Can't? I saw it myself." McGill had a most irritating laugh.

"Nobody would believe you on oath."

"They'll believe *you*." This was a

swift inspiration from Denny McGill; his sudden shot staggered the other man.

"Believe me."

"Yes, you. You saw it."

Before Will Austin could recover, McGill was briefly tabulating his facts: "You were passing this house?"

"Yes."

"Heard a woman scream for help? You rushed in?"

Austin nodded involuntarily.

"You found this lady, her dress torn, struggling with a man? *Who was that man?*"

Will Austin declined to nod, and McGill sneered at him: "The personal affair of a *gentleman* don't concern *my* kind of a man. Now, take it from me, that was your reform candidate for Governor. We have two witnesses to corroborate this lady. I can tell what I saw, and folks might say I was playin' politics. But *you*—McGill lifted his stubby finger and pointed straight at Will Austin.

The young man answered him just as straight. "McGill, when I ran into this room I couldn't believe my own eyes—"

"A jury will believe 'em mighty quick."

"Then *you* came; and I knew it was crooked. A frame-up."

McGill bit off the end of his cigar, and spat. "There you go, bleating about something what you can't prove."

"Give me Judge Kirk's letter." Dolly and McGill looked on, unconcernedly, while Austin searched the room, then came back to the door. For a moment he hesitated, as if minded to speak, thought better of it, and stepped out.

McGill grasped the woman's arm. "You tore up that letter?"

"No; I thought you had it."

Together they searched in earnest, turning the rugs, circling apart and meeting.

"Been nobody here to get it," Dolly observed.

"No—except that nigger."

"Oh, he's all right; he's the man that carried my note."

"What? How'd that happen?"

"I picked him up—on the street."

"That's Old Crit's office boy."

"Old Crit? Who's he?"

"Lawyer. Campaign manager for Judge Kirk. Slickest ever. If Old Crit went into local politics, I'd have to hunt a lower limb."

II

JUST before nine next morning, Stumpy added four large pasteboard boxes to the litter already piled upon a table in the middle room of Lawyer Crittenden's suite. William Austin watched him, and feared they might not have use for so many campaign badges.

Judge Kirk, himself, walked in. "Good morning, Stumpy. How do you feel, William?"

"Quite well, thank you. Stumpy, step out in the hall for a moment." The negro left and Austin turned. "Judge, I have something to tell you—"

"Which you do not want a respectable negro to hear; posing as that woman's husband. Looks bad."

The young man flushed, angrily, and not from shame.

"William, I did not know what to make of it."

"Neither did I—at first."

"But you saw it, and—"

"That's just the trouble." Austin hurried on determinedly, as if afraid he might stop before he got through. "I saw it, and what I saw looks mighty bad."

"William, what can you mean?"

"I heard that scream and ran in. The Hawthorne woman, hair down, dress torn, was struggling with you. Earlier in the evening you were talking to her in the hotel. That's what Denny McGill intends making me swear to at your trial."

"You! Testify to that! Against me?" The Judge thumped his cane on the floor.

"I've got to tell the truth,"—desperately,—*"and that's the truth, as far as I saw it."*

"It's blackmail! Blackmail! Where's Crittenden?"

"Stopped by the courthouse, I think. Wait—"

Judge Kirk had scarcely been gone five minutes when Crittenden came. The world could never look at this angular

lawyer without wondering whether Old Crit was laughing at it. Will Austin felt dubious; Crit was either smiling grimly, or he was very angry. His eyes sparkled, and then the thin lips snapped.

"William, I've just dodged Judge Kirk. Follow him. Keep him away from here. He mustn't talk to anybody."

"But, Mr. Crittenden, I don't want to show myself. Those reporters—"

"Stave 'em off a half hour, and 'twont matter. Now hurry. Don't stand there and ask fool questions."

This secured Will's exit, and Crittenden called: "Stumpy, I'm expecting Denny McGill, and a lady. Seat the lady in the anteroom. Bring Mr. McGill in here, and *leave him*, while you come to me. Shut my door tight behind you, remember."

"Yas suh; come plum' in, an' not holler?"

"And don't let him know that I'm expecting them."

AS Crittenden gave orders he was looking down at the confusion of his center table, boxes of campaign badges, legal documents, books. Taking out some letters, he dropped them carelessly on the table, then went into his private office and closed the door.

Within he listened, but not for long. Presently he could hear Stumpy answering McGill: "I'll see ef he's here."

Then McGill's voice came from the middle room. Stumpy rapped on the private door, entered, and shut it.

"Him an' de lady done come. Is you here?"

"Wait."

Crittenden held the negro for several minutes, then stalked into the middle room, with his long coat and straight black tie. Denny McGill felt momentarily uneasy, trying to guess whether those thin lips were twisted in a cynical smile or something else. As a matter of fact, Crittenden smiled inwardly, for he missed a letter from that table.

"Denny McGill, I told you not to come to my office. I'm very busy."

"Sorry, Mr. Crittenden, but our business is more'n apt to cause hard feelin's. Can't be no rough talk in your own office."

John Crittenden did not sit, nor did he invite McGill to a chair. "McGill, our campaign committee has no proposition to make, either for your support or for your silence."

From his own kind of man that was exactly the line of talk which the boss knew how to handle. He felt the ground getting more solid, stuck a cigar into his mouth, and began: "Your candidate is in a tight fix. The lady, out yonder, can tell you what happened."

"That woman? In my office?"

"Nagged me till I brought her. And Mr. Will Austin can back up what she says."

Old Crit nodded. "I've talked fully with Mr. Austin."

"He didn't say nothing to help Judge Kirk, or he wouldn't be hiding from the newspaper men, and the deputies."

"So the deputies are looking for Mr. Austin?"

"Just keepin' one eye on him, so they can put both hands on him durin' the day."

"McGill, what are you going to do?"

Denny McGill did nothing hurriedly; that's why he did things. "I was jes' thinkin'. This play come up so sudden."

"Oh, no. Don't try to tell me that."

"The lady will tell you for herself."

"I want to hear nothing she has to say. Good morning."

A rustle of silk came from the ante-room, and Mrs. Hawthorne appeared—Dolly in black, a new and even more attractive Dolly.

McGill waved his hand. "Mr. Crittenden, this is Mrs. Hawthorne."

Dolly entered, not defiantly or aggressively, but with composure and determination. "Oh, yes, I think the gentleman is going to listen to me," she said.

Denny McGill liked the way she began, strictly business; he backed off to give her plenty of room. Dolly had to look upwards at the craggy lawyer; she stopped, stared and wavered. It looked like a three-cornered astonishment.

Then Crittenden smiled most chivalrously and extended his hand. "I crave a thousand pardons, Mrs. Lonsdale, for keeping you waiting. I did not dream I was to have this honor."

"You are quite mistaken—quite mistaken," Dolly stammered.

McGill stood like a wooden man, gazing from one to the other, while Old Crit elaborated his best bow. "Impossible, Mrs. Lonsdale. I've been trying to forget you. Don't you remember meeting me on the train? Knoxville to Chattanooga? Last October?"

Dolly Hawthorne kept shaking her head, but with less and less vigor. Suddenly she dropped into a chair beside the table.

Old Crit bent over her and persisted. "But your baby was ill. Such a beautiful child! Surely you remember how I held her on a pillow?"

The woman looked up, struggled to control herself; then her head drooped again and her voice broke. "My baby died—that night."

Denny McGill felt stupid. He could not quite catch on to Dolly's game; but she was playing it darned well, and he hated to interrupt.

"Come, lady; let's get done with our business."

That's when Denny McGill got the surprise of his life. Dolly sprang up as if at the lash of a whip, and fronted him squarely.

"I'm already done with your business."

"What! You aint goin' to throw me down."

She turned her back upon McGill as if the man had ceased to exist.

"Mr. Crittenden, I can never forget your kindness to my baby. Until now, my associations have always been with gentlemen. I was desperate for money. I'm so ashamed. In pity, in pity, permit me to leave."

"Wait," Crittenden curtly ordered McGill. He gave his arm to Mrs. Hawthorne, leading her into his private office, and returned immediately to McGill. There was no mistaking what Crittenden meant. "Denny McGill, if you annoy that lady, I shall hold you *personally responsible*. Now good morning."

Denny McGill stood first on one foot and then on the other. There was nothing more to be said, and he turned to go.

"By the way, McGill, that envelope



Denny McGill liked the way she began, strictly business; he backed off to give her plenty of room. Dolly had to look upwards at the craggy lawyer; she stopped, stared and wavered.

in your pocket does not contain the Hawthorne letter to Judge Kirk. Better read it."

Denny's hand had already gone to his pocket. Having committed himself, he brought out the envelope—which was all right except the contents.

Vicksburg, Miss., July 21.
Received of Hon. Dennis P. McGill,
his check for Five Hundred Dollars,
dated July 22nd, and payable to Mrs.
Dolly Hawthorne. And one telegram
to same, reading, "Come first train,"
dated July 19th.

JOHN CRITTENDEN.

McGill let his tongue slip. "How'd you get 'em?"

"They were in this envelope when Stumpy brought it to me."

Denny McGill was a game loser.

"Mr. Crittenden, I know when I'm licked." The shifty boss stepped to the table, picked up a Kirk badge, and pinned it on his coat. "Here's where I climb into the band wagon. Gimme your hand on it."

"My hand!" Crittenden stood up pompously. "If you were not in my own office I should use my foot."

Which tickled McGill on his bump of humor.

"Don't bile over, Mr. Crittenden. Politics is politics. And the man who keeps his temper is the man who lands the jobs." He gathered a handful of badges. "No objection to me distributing these amongst the boys. Hurrah for Judge Kirk."

McGill paused in the doorway to lift his hat and cheer; then he strode through the anteroom and went stamping down the steps.

DOLLY ran in triumphant. "Did I do all right?"

"Let me congratulate you, madam,"—Crittenden bowed low,—"congratulate

you upon a most artistic and successful performance."

"I guess Denny McGill has forgotten what he did to my father. But I'm even with him."

"Yes. Run to the window; see how Denny's taking the street."

They were standing at the window, laughing, when Will Austin bounded up the steps, three at a time, and rushed through to the private office. "Mr. Crittenden! Mr. Crittenden! McGill has announced for Judge Kirk. Oh! Pardon me—" He turned with a gasp.

"Wait, William. Mrs. Lonsdale, will you kindly step into this room for one moment." There was no doubt that Crittenden was smiling as he held open the door, and closed it again.

"Now, William; you have something on your chest?"

"Denny McGill? What's the answer?"

"He's going to help elect our man."

"But his frame-up?"

"My frame-up."

"Yours?"

Old Crit nodded, and seshfully enjoyed his chuckle. Then: "William, I'll bust if I don't tell *somebody*. Denny McGill has been racking his brain for a story to defeat the Judge. Figured on two or three schemes which wouldn't work; then I suggested this."

"You suggested it?"

"Of course Denny couldn't suspect *me*. The inspiration came through a friend of his—and mine. Mrs. Lonsdale had a grudge against the gang for ousting her father, years ago. I helped Denny's friend select her to pull off the play. Bob Caruthers lent his cottage—good stage. I sent the Judge a half hour in advance. Would have had our witnesses, but you happened in and acted your part very creditably indeed. Rather neat little play, wasn't it, William?"

"The Sins of The Children" By Cosmo Hamilton
a brilliant novel by the author of "The Blindness of Virtue,"

begins in the next—the June—issue of The Red Book Magazine on the news-stands May 23rd.

THE old story of the Ugly Duckling,
told from a very, very new angle.

Marthy!

By Ida M. Evans

Author of "Mudpuddles," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

IF any fairy godmothers had an invitation to be present and fling a few needed blessings around at the hour of Marthy Josefson's advent into this bourne of time and place, they either declined or forgot all about the engagement. Probably a *thé dansant* or the Drama Club claimed their presence on that morning. The only things present that even remotely resembled those old ladies of notoriously fickle benevolence were the gray cloud-hoods and the somber smoke-scarfs which on that day—as on most calendar days—lay morosely tight about the chimneys and the roofs of River Street.

Before Marthy, five or six children had already been born to her sullen parents. Five or six others were born after her.

Even in the best-financed families, such a betwixt-and-between position is not considered felicitous. Parents, rich or poor, wise or foolish, conscientious or happy-go-lucky, have a habit of putting most reliance (which makes for sinews of soul) upon their eldest; and they have an inclination to put most affection (which makes for ease of soul) upon their youngest. And those born along the middle of the line are, in a



"I want to buy it! I want to wear it!" And nonchalantly she tossed down thirty-five dollars!

way, overlooked. By the time she was eighteen months old, Marthy had the melancholy mien of one who feels herself superfluous in the family circle; and her small mouth was continually puckered with hunger.

Her father (one of the long, sullen army to whom the stockyards are home, hope, trade, meal-ticket, guardian, whip, solace, dread, resource, priest, devil, scourge and salvation) early bade the firstlings of his brood get out and get a job and so contribute much needed shares to the family larder—a larder at times so bare that you could scrape from it only a hungry din.

With a willingness that would have delighted a Montessori promulgator, they obeyed and got out—principally because home had no tentacles of charm to hold them back. The boys scooted to

various lines of labor like rabbits from a foodless hutch to a cabbage field. Jenny, the oldest girl, and Lena, the next, likewise expeditiously sallied forth where the work-wheels of the world buzzed. Around River Street those wheels buzz fast, for long hours and without sanitation. Jenny—and Lena at her heels—blinked awhile from fright, blinked off that fright, spied an opening in a dark, dank coop of industry labeled Bamberg's Hat Factory, and crawled in; and presently both were tasting the fluctuating delights of piece-work.

About the work there was more fluctuation than delight. Bamberg was a wizened snarl of calculation who had reached this country by way of the steerage and who thoroughly despised all his employees because they or their parents had done the same. Also he despised hats, the girls who made 'em, the women who wore 'em, the jobbers who charged him outrageously high prices for material and the retailers who offered him outrageously low prices for the finished product. But he could hate hard and calculate hard at the same time, and his factory had a longer busy season than any other of its class. A snarl from which emanates a pay-envelope possesses its own glamour. Soon Jenny and Lena carried their small, pinched shoulders more reliantly for having met and coped with that snarl. They even (behind the wizened Bamberg back, though) took upon themselves a certain insouciant pride. It was the natural insouciance and the unconscious pride of the vanguard or of the pioneer. Pioneers early know that life is not a mere matter of food and sleep; there is also achievement.

And at home the two girls, like their brothers, were soon treated with a certain unconscious respect by the dejected parents whom life had treated so disrespectfully as to give more progeny than teaspoons. It was the respect which is always, though sometimes quite unconsciously, tendered to pioneers, achievers and pay-envelopes.

At this time Marthy was six years old, and she had the glum mien of one who habitually hankers for more bread and butter. Her small, pale eyebrows were

morosely puckered together under a mussed mop of pale hair. It seemed to be an ineradicable pucker. But 'most any six-year-old would find it hard to refrain from moroseness with three pulling, pulling brothers, younger than herself, habitually cornering most of the available supply of buttered and unbuttered bread.

She glumly envied Jenny and Lena, though at the same time she admired them vastly, and realized that it was eminently fitting that the meat-stew should be passed first to them, after their father had been served. But she bitterly could not understand why thereupon the two youngest of the family should be attended to and herself neglected!

She wished heartily to grow up and be twelve years old and go to work likewise. To Marthy, all the wisdom and the opportunism of the world were typified by Jenny's cross little voice and Lena's bulgy little forehead.

MARTHY got her wish, in time. She grew up. She became twelve years old. The pale, mussed mop of hair went into a scrawny, mussed braid. She went to work.

Poor Marthy! her star was not in the ascendant.

For her there was waiting none of the satisfaction found by the pioneer, none of the assertiveness to be won by those thrown out to shift for themselves, very little of the soul-sinews that are acquired by the vanguard. She went to work in Bamberg's Hat Factory, but she was guided by Jenny and Lena's plain, sure footprints. Also she wore Jenny's old brown coat—which was too large for her—and Lena's old green hat—which was too flat for her—and Jenny's old shoes—which were too loose for her.

She did not have to hunt an opening. Jenny had found it for her. She did not have to blink off fright. Lena showed her where to hang her coat and hat, where to sit, how to hold her needle. Jenny basted the scrim foundation on her first wire frame. Lena directed the first blue pyroxylin-braid row sewed on that frame.

Old Bamberg's snarl did not startle

her. For six years past she had heard Jenny and Lena describe it, and make light of it.

At this time Marthy wore the resigned glum mien of one who has about made up her mind that the world's supply of food will give out before the world's inhabitants are summoned elsewhere. She had acquired more inches than the Josefsen dietary justified, being over five feet. But evidently this superfluous height had been garnered from material needed for width, for she was very scrawny. "As scrawny as a mop-stick!" Jenny upbraided her. "Nobody's coat would fit you, Marthy Josefsen! O-oh,"—in alarm,—“you're sewing the ro-

time to sew a nine-cent hat *twice!*” pun-
gently informed Lena.

Meekly Marthy, between them, sewed the slippery pyroxylin rosette tighter—looser—tighter again. With a somewhat glum admiration she observed Jenny and Lena and some two hundred other girls toss off hats, brown, black, navy, green, purple, red, white, at what seemed to her a marvelous speed—though va-



She meekly bore Bamberg's berating.

sette too tight on that hat! Stop it!"

"And her head's so flat," complained Lena on the other side, "that *nobody's* hat would fit it! O-oh! Marthy!"—in reproach,—“you've sewed that rosette too loose now! Old Bamberg just *raves* when things are sewed too loose! And lots of times he makes you sew the *whole* hat over again!"

"And this hat is only nine cents!" sternly informed Jenny.

"And at piece-work you aint got no

rious industrial investigating committees might not have agreed with her. Presently she meekly bore Bamberg's berating—audible to the entire workroom—because that treacherous rosette was too painfully tight at edge and too scandalously loose at center.

"I knew it, Marthy!" gloomed Lena.

"I told you so, Marthy!" frowned Jenny.

To tell the truth, Marthy was glumly relieved when, a year or so later, Jenny

and Lena quit work to marry, and she was left alone, to make her own mistakes alone and take the blame for them alone.

But by that time she had the apprehensive mien of an habitual mistake-maker. Marthy was not a natural needlewoman. And so her pay-envelope was thin—not that she cared much. Fat or thin, it benefited her little. Like a wide-snouted shark, the Josefsen larder snapped at that envelope and swallowed it whole before she scarcely had a chance to finger its thickness—especially after Lena and Jenny married and their money was not forthcoming.

But if she made hats slowly, she made them steadily. And if she botched them often, so that five times out of ten Bambarg's roar was directed at her, sullen and abashed, she had the glum consolation of knowing that five girls out of every ten in the factory were as slow, stupid and scrawny as herself. Bambarg employed many betwixt-and-betweens, many with a larder snapping at them from behind. So there was no special danger of Marthy's losing her job.

For fourteen years Marthy sewed hats steadily. That made her twenty-six years old—which is not a felicitous age for the best-circumstanced women. Youth is then going; middle-age is coming; and you stand glumly between the two, reluctantly saying "Good-by" to one, reluctantly saying "How d'ye do?" to the other. Between the two Marthy Josefsen stood like a penniless, melancholy landlady between a departing deadbeat boarder and an arriving grim landlord. One had cheated her, but she could never by any chance hope to cheat the other.

But she did not say "Good-by" to the one, or "How d'ye do?" to the other. It was busy season. Bambarg's hat-factory was heaped so high with hats,—purple, black, brown, navy, red, green,—braid, plush, wire, mull, ticket-tags, catalogues and Bambarg's roar, that it choked for breath and for breathing time. There was no leisure for superfluous farewells and how-d'ye-do's. Every girl sewed as fast as she could—body bent forward, cheeks fever-red, eyes fever-bright, hands tense.

AT this time Marthy was a lank, melancholy person, very tall, very scrawny, with glum, greenish eyes which were disfigured by rims reddened by long years of sewing under poor lights. She had a glum, grayish complexion, owing to the poor air of home as well as of factory. Her lips were glumly flat, as though life—or hunger—had slapped all desire out of them. She had gaunt, glum hands which held hats dejectedly, as though longing to let them fall. She had large, listless feet which moved heavily, as though weighted. Her hats—

You never would have guessed from the hats that Marthy wore that she was a hat-maker and knew more about the interior of headgear than a butcher knows about bologna. They were sad, dejected affairs, always with either a handed-down or a picked-up look. You might have thought that since Marthy worked all day—all week, all year, nearly—among hats, she would take the time and the trouble to evolve something pretty for her own wearing.

But Marthy—had she not been too glumly taciturn—would have set you right! She could have told you—had she not been too listless—that she did not like hats. She had no more desire for them than has the average confectioner for maple fudge. She had been surfeited with them; in a lackadaisical way she loathed them. At the end of a day marked by much roaring from Bambarg she might have declared that they nauseated her—especially pyroxylin, that wiry, slithery, slippery braid which formed the bulk of Bambarg's output—detestable stuff with which you writhed all day and about which you laboriously dreamed all night.

She might have added, dejected, that in the fourteen years past she had made some forty-two thousand hats, averaging ten a day, averaging nine cents apiece (and it seemed like forty-two millions!), of hemp, milan, mull, leghorn, satin, silk, plush, crêpe, velvet, fur, pyroxylin—oh, especially pyroxylin! How she had disliked a floppy, askew gray pyroxylin turban that Jenny after three seasons' wear had passed on to her!

But Marthy obediently wore it till age almost flopped it into desuetude, wore

it till it was no longer wearable, even by her. Dislike with Marthy was a listless emotion. And one hat covers your head as well as another.

And so when Clarabel Brennen, who sat beside her (and who lived in the same block), exuberantly demanded, "Marthy, what kind of a hat are you going to get this spring?" Marthy indifferently replied, the while painstakingly tacking purple cherry-blossoms to a pink plush twig, "Oh—I dunno."

"I b'lieve I'll get a mauve chip,"—confidentially.

"Will you?"—listlessly.

"Or would you get a maroon?"

"Oh—I dunno," said Marthy, painstakingly quirking the pink plush twig.

"Or—*how* do you think a tan hemp would look on me?"

"I s'pose so," said Marthy, listlessly inspecting the quirked twig.

"I've always worshiped black and white," meditated Clarabel. "But I wonder—" Her small hands relaxed from their own work; her needle sagged idly; and her eyes, which were a duskier blue than the paon pansies in her lap, looked mystically far off, far beyond the workroom—looked, it needed no wizard to guess, at an ultra-desirable picture of herself modishly hatted!

And there was nothing melancholy about Clarabel's eyes or mien—though her family, technically speaking, had about the same social status as the Josefsons in the same block. Clarabel and Marthy walked far different aisles of circumstance.

CLARABEL was not a betwixt-and-between. She was a Benjamin, and her parents and some ten or twelve older brothers and sisters would, if they could, have stood between her and the kicks of life. She was one of the pretty little flowers that quite often perk up out of tenement clay—with a white, swaying stem of a neck, with a pink-white petal of a face—perhaps rather a hard, pert little face, but petal-like for all that. The Brennen larder never snapped at Clarabel's pay-envelope. The contents went entirely to adorn Clarabel's prettiness.

"I wish I had a million dollars to

spend on hats," she now sighed, distastefully picking up her needle. "And I wish I didn't have to make 'em for old Bambarg."

"I wish you'd work more and gab less," snarled old Bambarg in her pretty white ear, and stamped on.

The ear became scarlet. But Clarabel's slim shoulders twitched defiantly. And turning, she grimaced at the wizened back.

Then she pettishly announced—though in cautious whisper: "And I'm not going to make 'em much longer. You don't catch me slaving all my life!"

Across the table three or four interested heads raised. Marthy, though, sewed monotonously on.

"What are you going to do?" a stodgy brunette wanted to know. "Get married?"

"No, Hetty,"—with scorn. "Not to any fellow I've met yet. But does anybody think I'm going to sit here for seven or eight dollars a week when the movie firms are paying three dollars and a half a day—to their supes?"

Three or four interested heads were startled.

"But aint it hard to get in?" inquired the stodgy Hetty.

Clarabel shrugged slim, assured shoulders. "Oh—maybe, for some people. But a lot of persons have told me that I look *remarkably* like Mary Pickford—except that my chin"—with modesty—"is a wee bit more round."

An anemic blonde looked up interestedly from sorting mull ruffles. "When do you think you'll go?" she asked. "Maybe I'll go along! A friend of mine compared my profile with Billie Burke's—"

"I'd just as soon go too," said Hetty. "But aint it dangerous jumping off precipices? And then there's the lions—"

"Oh, there's some trick to it," declared the blonde. "They don't really do anything dangerous, because I know a man who knows an electrician who once—"

"Aint there any danger?" snapped a red-haired young turban-maker. "Well, I can tell you there is! I knew a girl who knew a girl who had to fall in a water-tank, and she sprained her ankle—"

Red-hair, anemic blonde, stodgy brunette, pretty Clarabel and several others hastily fell to making hats as fast as their fingers could jab needles into frames. At the end of the table stood old Bambarg, having meanly sneaked back, and he was roaring: "*Will* you stop this eternal talk—gab—jabber? I'm waiting for hats—hats—*hats!*"

Unlucky Marthy! She had not said a word. She had scarcely heard a word, being dejectedly engrossed with a plush twig that stuck out haughtily instead of reclining gracefully on a brim. But old Bambarg's angry glance went over red-hair, anemic blonde, stodgy brunette and pretty Clarabel to vent its spleen on her melancholy face. And it was straight at Marthy that he bellowed: "D'ye hear me?"

"Yes sir," sighed Marthy.

Bambarg stalked away. "Mean old thing!" muttered Clarabel to Marthy, who was the only one near enough to hear a mutter. "Wait till after busy season when I'll have enough saved to buy a swell suit. Then I'll jump out of here and never come back!"

"Will you?" listlessly said Marthy, pulling the twig this way and then that. And then she forgot all about Clarabel's hopes and plans—till six weeks later, when Clarabel's mother stopped her on the corner of their street and begged her, as a neighborly favor, to accompany Clarabel the next morning to a film studio some seven miles across town, and ascertain if her pretty youngest were going into legitimate toil or a den of wild beasts.

Marthy was startled. Never before had her services been in demand.

"Her sisters can't go," explained Mrs. Brennen. "And Clarabel is so pretty and young,"—worriedly. "But I can't talk her out of the idea. So if you'd just go along and keep an eye open so that nobody takes advantage of her, I'd be ever so much obliged!"

Marthy hesitated. She felt incompetent to chaperon pretty little wise Clarabel.

Mrs. Brennen misunderstood her hesitation. "I wouldn't ask you to spare the half-day,"—apologetically,— "but it's slack-time at the factory, I know. And

of course I'll pay your street-car fare."

Not having any valid reason for refusal, Marthy listlessly agreed to oblige, though she rather expected Clarabel to resent her company. Stolid-witted as Marthy was, she could appraise that pert little wise flower better than could the mother of it, and she fancied that Clarabel could take fairly good care of herself in almost any environment.

But Clarabel good-humoredly tolerated the chaperonage. "Oh, come along! Anything to satisfy Ma!" And though the morning was gray, Clarabel, in flaring new bronze silk dress, high new bronze boots and perky bronze-and-green hat, was a sunshiny flash. And as a chaperon, Marthy availed little. Clarabel made coquettish eyes at a passing chauffeur whom the bright outfit attracted; she smiled at a newsboy; she dimpled at the motorman; while Marthy tagged stolidly along, unnoting and unnoticed. Poor Marthy! The ways of coquetry were alien to her. In her twenty-six betwixt-and-between years, she had never had the impulse—or the energy, perhaps—to lift inviting eyes to any man. Nor had any man ever looked to see if she might!

And Marthy stood stolidly still while Clarabel was ecstatically brought to a stop by a hat in a shop window between the street-car and the Nouveau Filmograph studio. It was no such hat as Bambarg and his competitors ever put out; no such hat had ever been seen on murky River Street. It was a classical white straw, bearing a languorous huge white bird such as never is bred out of Paris, that choice breeding-place of millinery birds; and it was marked—thirty-five dollars!

"And with my first week's pay I'm going to get it!" squealed Clarabel. "Aint it a dream? Aint it grand? Aint it lovely?"

"I s'pose so," said Martha listlessly.

ABOUT the time that the two girls were leaving the street-car, Mr. Abraham McMorency, head manager and director of the Nouveau Film Company, raised irritable eyes from a massive heap of mail to the gray sky outside his office window and pettishly asked his

aide and secretary, Alfred Colkes, what and how many were outside. On gray days the atmosphere of a studio is apt to be pettish.

Mr. Colkes, a slim sapling in tan flannels, furtively opened a door to an anteroom and reported: "Scads."

"What?"

Mr. Colkes took a longer peek. "All kinds."

"Go out and see if any of 'em are worth standing room in a mob scene."

For some reason Mr. Colkes cast a glance of injury at his chief. But he went out, coming back in four minutes to report that in the anteroom there were: eleven gentlemen with Charlie Chaplin mustaches; three ladies (about forty years old) wistful like Mary Pickford; five ladies, age uncertain but with double chins, who had mannered themselves after Blanche Sweet; seven ex-burlesquers, peroxided and determined; two high-school girls posed imperiously like Pauline Frederick; five elderly gents resembling—so they confided—Joseph Jefferson; seven ladies with Billie Burke's pensive expression; three with eyes which, they claimed would

not behave; one who had all Lillian Russell's charm, besides a facial facility—so she explained—which Lillian lacked; four gentlemen wearing the late Richard Mansfield's hauteur, which they would condescend to transfer to the screen for a stipend,—a large stipend,—though they realized that they were prostituting their art.

"That all?"

"A scattering of Marguerite Clarkish persons"—wearily—"and some James Hackett hopes—"

Mr. McMorency looked bored.



"And some pretty girls."

Mr. McMorency rapidly chewed at a perfectly good Egyptian cigarette made in New York and looked savage. "How many of them?" injuredly he wanted to know.

Injuredly in turn Mr. Colkes ejaculated, as though more was demanded of him than any employer had a right to expect: "Now, how could I count all them?"

"Oh Lord!" groaned McMorency. "How I loathe pretty girls! I'm not feeling well. I won't talk to 'em this morning. Go and tell 'em—"

"Say, you can't shove all your hard work on me!" exploded Mr. Colkes. "I

To Marthy, he said: "We'll give you five dollars." Marthy looked at him stolidly. "I make more'n that at Bamberg's in busy season," she said.

could hardly get back the last time I went out! Six jumped for me—"

McMorency put an elbow on the desk and leaned his large, smooth black head on a large, smooth white hand. "I am so tired"—piteously—"of pretty girls, sweet girls, fair girls, lovely girls, striking girls, dashing girls, Madonna girls, cute girls, chic girls, graceful girls, classic girls, languorous girls, exquisite girls—oh my Gawd; show some in. Might as well get it over with for the day." He scowled out the window at the gray sky which postponed pictures for another day.

The impartial Mr. Colkes would have shown in first an impressive black-dressed young woman from Evanston, dramatic-school graduate, who had strategically placed herself and her hopes nearest the office door, fully intending to be first shown in. But the Evanstonian had reckoned not with the feline celerity of Clarabel from Bambarg's, a celerity-inspiring place. Arriving at that moment and instantly understanding the situation, she deftly slid in ahead.

"Such impudence!" gasped the Evanstonian, following fast.

"Sorry," declared McMorency to both. "But at present we need no one. You may leave your address, and we may send—"

AT that precise moment a dark, disheveled man in shirtsleeves wormed through the mobbed office door and excitedly informed McMorency that a telegraphed weather-report promised a satin-blue sky for afternoon, and that therefore they could work! And supes for a street scene were needed.

With suddenly alert eyes, McMorency stepped to the door and inspected the crowd. He saw girls with golden hair, nut-brown, black, gray, Titian, girls with sleek locks, curly locks, fluffed locks, spit-curls, pompadours, fish-hooks, ear-warmers, beau-catchers—

Afterward he told his aide and friend that it was the shock of his life to spy Marthy with her limp pale hair, topped by a limp black hat whose only trimming was a disabled, aged quill. Waiting stolidly on a chair for Clarabel, about as chaperon-like to that insouciant young

flower as a lame old toad to a gay young robin, she looked dejected, forlorn, melancholy—

"As sad as a drowned codfish," McMorency later described her.

Marthy saw him look at her, then advance straight toward her, but she had no education to enable her to read correctly the admiring light in his alert eyes. With an impatient, large hand he pushed back the chattering Clarabel and the indignant Evanstonian and appraised Marthy with eyes that for fifteen years had been in the appraising business and knew to the fraction of a degree the value, on the screen and on the stage, of "type." And by type, Abraham McMorency did not mean just what Clarabel and others did.

And when he had appraised her, he drew a long, contented breath.

"Say!" he jubilated to Colkes, "I thought she was made up, but she was the real thing! By jiminy, I don't have to teach her, I don't have to coach her. Just as she is—that's just the way I want her! She made me think of all the sad things in life—November rain and neuralgia, prairie shanties and mug-wumps, and a March wind souging through an Iowa cornshock."

"She looks like she's always had the toothache," snickered Mr. Colkes.

"She sure does," happily said Mr. McMorency.

To Marthy, he said: "We'll give you five dollars."

Marthy looked at him stolidly. She had not come for work; she was the one in ten thousand who did not yearn for film work. She did not know why the man should be offering her work, and so she was unimpressed.

"I make more'n that at Bambarg's in busy season," she said simply.

McMorency eyed her anew. So she wasn't so stupid as she seemed!

"How much do you get now?" he asked kindly.

"One week I made seven dollars and sixty-five cents."

"Oh—" McMorency hastened to explain that his offer was per day—not per week.

Suspiciously Marthy edged away from him.

It took him twenty minutes to explain. "Well, I think this is a funny place!" tartly commented Clarabel.

McMorency tolerantly told Clarabel she might also come along—at three-fifty. Then he sprinted to the rear of the big building.

"I don't understand this!" said Clarabel haughtily.

Marthy didn't either. She walked on so thoughtfully that she sprawled over a coil of wire. A grimy electrician with twinkling eyes picked her up.

"That isn't in to-day's picture," he rebuked her.

"Isn't it?" said Marthy humbly.

But McMorency had seen it, as he was hustling back. "Say, do that again," he besought. "I like that!"

"I must say picture work isn't what I expected," sniffed Clarabel.

Marthy stood stupidly still.

"Oh, well," conceded McMorency mercifully, "we'll let it go till we get a scenario to fit it. But it was some sprawl!"

"Say!" demanded the electrician, "you certainly must have hunted hard to get your outfit!" Like McMorency's eyes, his tone held absolute admiration. "I've worked in studios ever since the first one was opened, and I never saw anything like it! It's a new idea, all right!"

Marthy stared at him.

"Aint it, though?" jubilated McMorency. "Say, Colkes! Asleep? The sun's out!"

Presently Marthy, being directed, stood in front of a camera and successively registered despair, woe, dejection, gloom, melancholy, shabbiness, sullenness, resignation, sorrow, glumness—all with one posture and one expression. "It's a shame to stop," at last said McMorency in delight. "She is certainly all to the good."

Not to Marthy did he say it, though. On general principles he never complimented an actress where she could hear him—unless one caught him and forcibly pried a compliment from between his large, white teeth.

Being directed, Marthy went to an office and got a slip which, being further directed, she exchanged for a five-dollar

bill at another office. Clarabel got a slip for three-fifty.

"Well, I must say this seems awful queer to me," haughtily commented Clarabel as they went home after being told to come back the next morning—that is, Marthy had been earnestly ordered to come back; Clarabel had been carelessly told she might trot along with Marthy.

It seemed queer to Marthy, too. But being taciturn, she did not say so. She held the five-dollar bill spread out in her lap, and all the long ride home she regarded it gingerly. Such a sum for such a trifle of toil! It was uncanny! She couldn't understand!

Annoyedly Clarabel regarded the bill. Then annoyedly her dusky blue eyes shifted to her own purse with its smaller three-fifty.

"I bet that electrician had awful hard work not to laugh when you sprawled over his wire." There was no denying that Clarabel was feline.

At last Marthy broke the stolid silence of the day. "But he didn't laugh, did he?"—gratefully.

THE next morning Marthy dressed up!

Dressing up meant that she borrowed Jenny's best hat, an ornate green chip representing three dollars, two summers and all the color aspirations of a busy skimmed housewife who used to be a milliner. Also Marthy wore her other dress. No one, perhaps, but a movie director who made films, lived films, dreamed films and digested films, could have noticed that Marthy was differently dressed from the day before. But McMorency noticed at once, and he simply raved!

"I *didn't* think you'd last here, Marthy," whispered Clarabel.

Marthy bent dejectedly to the storm of reprimand. McMorency finally ordered her to get herself home, as fast as her legs could take her, and return in the same clothes, to the last stitch, that she had worn the day before.

Marthy was willing—more than willing. She had dressed up merely to do all her poor best to deserve that extraordinary five dollars! Therefore very meekly she rode the seven miles home,

changed — to the mystification of her mother and sisters—and rode stolidly back again. It took two hours, but in the Bamberg factory there was one intricate hat whose making took exactly two hours—and which often you had to make over, and for which you got fourteen cents!

When she again reached the studio, a group, consisting of manager, aide, operator, leading woman, leading man, Clarabel and some other extras, arose from chairs on which they had been waiting more or less patiently. Clarabel arose sulkily. Just for Marthy!

The picture turned out well. McMorency came around and looked at Marthy again—though she didn't know it. Another director came and looked at her—and she didn't know it. The electrician looked at her—

"I s'pose he thinks I'm an awful stupid person to stumble over a heap of wire," dejectedly murmured Marthy to Clarabel.

"I s'pose he does,"—cruelly. "Why don't you look where you're going?"

But the pictures' turning out so excellently proved to McMorency his pet theory: that art to be perfect must not be art—also that acting to be effective cannot be acting, and that all luck is accidental. And wasn't he the lucky chap to find Marthy! He said to Colkes:

"She's a peach! I can make her a hounded stenographer, or a poor working girl—"

"Believe me, she looks the part!"

"—or an abused orphan, or deceived sister, or a homeless aunt—"



"But you can't make her a deserted wife," interjected Mr. Colkes.

"Why can't I?"

"Because the public wouldn't blame the deserting husband," giggled Mr. Colkes. "You could use her for a sad sea wave, however."

For twenty days Marthy registered various emotions—all, however, with woe as their keynote. That meant one hundred dollars. Count it yourself.

Marthy counted it over and over. It was dazing. Her family regarded it dazedly, also, and counted it several times. And Marthy was treated with a certain awe from which suspicion was not entirely absent.

"I'm sure I can't understand it," sniffed Clarabel, who worked only four days out of the twenty. After the steady twenty

days there came a workless interval of a week. Marthy at home was restless. It was the first time that she had ever had a whole idle week since she was twelve.

Then there was more work—at more than five dollars a day! McMorency heard that the Superfine people were casting covetous eyes over his studio. Hastily he strove to bind his find with greenback bands.

"I bet you're making more than I am," said the electrician with twinkly eyes one day.

"Maybe I am," demurely confessed Marthy. By that time she had acquired a tolerable degree of familiarity with the studio and the people about it, though she never lost a certain wonder.

"That's the way it goes," grumbled Dolph Connors. "Here I slave for years at my trade, hoping to save enough to furnish a seven-room flat some day for a wife and her folks, and you flip in between street-cars and grab off all the coin that aint nailed away! I'm so discouraged I can eat only four pork-chops for supper."

Over Marthy's small, pale face spread a naïve film of satisfaction. "We had pork-chops at our house last night," she said bashfully.

"I didn't hear you



Marthy walked on so thoughtfully that she sprawled over a coil of wire. A grimy electrician with twinkling eyes picked her up. "That ain't in to-day's picture," he rebuked her.

ask me out," reproached the electrician.

Marthy giggled.

"I'd like to see you in regular clothes," he continued.

Marthy's bashful giggle stopped short. She looked down at her saggy, shabby skirt and old shoes. Then her pale eyebrows puckered together. And thoughtfully she walked back to a calling director.

NINETEEN days later Abraham McMorency took a long look at Marthy—who did not know it. Then he called a sub-manager, who also took a long, appraising look. Then the two called young Mr. Colkes, who also took a look, long and hard. Then the three moodily talked low and long. Then they again looked at Marthy. She was leaning against a plastered pillar of a dismembered Venetian palace. From the skylight above, a bar of yellow sunshine fell over her pale hair, over her face and tall form.

Mr. Abraham McMorency was never a man of excessive kindness unless kindness paid financially. And his morning coffee had curdled while he read a morning column edited by an artistic, ascetic young critic who many times in the past had spoken with lukewarm admiration of Abraham McMorency. In this column the manager had read that the Nouveau Company was nothing to be proud of, that it was punk, that its pictures lately had been worse than punk, that its manager was a frost.

"I didn't like that last picture myself," gloomed McMorency.

"I didn't say anything, but I wasn't stuck on the one before," said Mr. Colkes.

Mr. McMorency savagely chewed a rank Turkish cigarette made in Chinatown. Then he stamped over to Marthy.

"Say, the last pictures of you have been punk,"—aggrievedly. "You don't look like you did when I engaged you!"

"D-don't I?" stammered Marthy, startled.

"Naw, you don't!"—angrily. "You're not the same girl. You're getting fat! You're contented-looking! There aint any hollows in your cheeks! There aint

any melancholy red rims around your eyes! You aint bony! And you walk better than you did! You're nearly pretty!"

"A-am I?" said Marthy.

"Yes, you are!"—hotly.

"What shall I do?" begged Marthy anxiously.

"Do! Go back where you come from!" And he stalked away, shoving two pretty extras out of his path.

Marthy ran after him. "But can't you use me as an extra—if I'm—" She blushed demurely.

"Naw! I can't! 'Cause you aint pretty enough to be pretty, and you aint ugly enough to be ugly! You're betwixt and between." And on he stalked.

Marthy stood thoughtfully still. But the demure blush still lingered.

And it still lingered when presently she walked, rather slowly, over to a coil of wire which the electrician was fumbling with.

"I'm fired," she confided.

"Are you?" said Dolph Connors. "Don't you care! I'll give you a steady job."

Marthy's demure blush deepened. "Will you?"

"Sure, I will. And in about an hour, as soon as I get this job finished, I'll meet you and we'll go to a park or some place where I can offer it artistically!"

Marthy's eyes danced demurely.

"Will you?" softly asked the electrician.

"Not in an hour," said Marthy. "But in two hours I will."

"I'll wait—I mean I'll hold the position," assured he with twinkling eyes.

Marthy hurried for her hat, hurriedly rode home and changed to a different dress—a perky white dress that Jenny and Lena had helped her make one idle week. Then she hastily rode back—but not quite to the studio. She stopped at the shop in whose window she and Clara-bel had once seen a white hat, marked thirty-five dollars.

"I want to buy it!" rather breathlessly she told the saleswoman. "No, not in a box—I want to wear it!" And nonchalantly she tossed down thirty-five dollars!

THOU shalt not spend all that thou earnest," is the theme of this new novel, "The Thirteenth Commandment," by Rupert Hughes. It is the intimate story of the lives of Americans in the years of 1914 and 1915, and shows the modern epidemic of spending that is breaking men, spoiling romance, and sending more women to seek independence.

Daphne Kip, the heroine, is a Cleveland girl whose father puts a second mortgage on a piece of property to furnish money for her trousseau. Clay Wimburn, her fiancé, is a young New Yorker with bright prospects who goes into debt to buy her engagement ring.

While doing her shopping in New York, Daphne is expensively entertained by Wimburn.

One night, as an especial treat, he takes her for supper to Claremont. It is two days to his pay-day and he figures he can just make it. By mistake he tips the waiter five dollars for a seat for Daphne. When the check comes, he is staggered. The melon he ordered has cost twice as much as he expected. He cannot tip the waiter and there is an embarrassing scene. He is without even carfare and they have to walk four miles home.

In his misery Wimburn lets Daphne see that his bank account is also wiped out. She is heartsick as she sees stretching before her the same penny-fighting existence she has so hated at home.

At the apartment of her brother, Bayard Kip, who has been in Europe on his honeymoon with his beautiful bride Leila, Kip himself opens the door. "Money gave out, so we had to come home," he laughs. "What's the good word?"

"Lend me five dollars," answers Wimburn.

LEILA KIP is a spendthrift. Kip won her away from Tom Duane, a wealthy New York clubman. She soon has Kip worried over her extravagance. One day she has expensive gowns for Daphne and herself charged to her husband. He is enraged. Daphne returns her gown and determines never again to accept anything from any man. She breaks her engagement and decides to go to work.

Daphne's first hard lesson in the life of independence comes when she asks Duane to help her get a position on the stage. Duane makes love to her but is repulsed. He obtains for her a posi-



Daphne Kip.

The Previous Chapters of "The Thirteenth Commandment"

tion as an understudy of a popular actress. She gets the opportunity to play the star's part one night, fails, and is consoled by Duane, not Wimburn, who has hated her stage work.

Duane now entertains her at Claremont. His supper is a tantalizing display of power and luxury. Daphne feels the lure of it. However, he again presumes to be loverlike and Daphne decides to see no more of him. She and Wimburn are reconciled and resume their courtship with ardor. At last the peril of the closeness of their relationship alarms them and they decide to marry at once. But the war has begun. Times are bad. Wimburn's salary is cut in half and Daphne looks again for work.

The war is hitting everyone. Bayard Kip loses everything. Wimburn's job at half salary vanishes. And old Wesley Kip, Daphne's father, comes to beg his son for money to save the old home. With father, brother and lover all incapable of helping her, Daphne takes a position at eight dollars a week, addressing letters to pay for her little room with a Mrs. Chivvis, with whom she has gone to live. But she has to lose even that position because the foreman insults her.

And now, when Daphne's cup of despair is full, other troubles from her own worry her. Her sister-in-law, Leila, who is embittered because of the pleasureless life she has to live, encourages the attentions of an Englishman, who has lately come to New York. Finally Daphne tells her brother. He confronts the man and warns him to keep away from his wife. Leila is infuriated and the fortunes of the whole family seem irretrievably lost, when Clay Wimburn bursts upon them with the news that he has found the way to wealth for himself and them all. From an emissary of the English government he has got contracts to manufacture munitions. He offers Bayard the opportunity to make the deal with their old firm. Bayard accepts, only to find that the English emissary is Wetherell, the man with whom his wife has been coquetting. But poverty has been so bitter that he swallows his pride and goes on. He and Clay soon become wealthy. Bayard gives Daphne a thousand dollars as a present, and she is disgusted to find herself exulting at the riches of her men-folk, for she herself has done nothing. Duane now asks her to marry him and Clay presses his suit. She refuses both, determined at last to work out her own independence.

The THIRTEENTH



LEILA KIP, of whom Tom Duane said, when his mother asked him if Leila had not hit him pretty hard: "Not half so hard as she hit Bayard Kip when he married her. He saved my life and lost his own."

CHAPTER LX

WHEN Tom Duane told Daphne that he had dared his mother to lunch with her, and his mother had accepted, he was not exactly a liar. His phrase "I dared her to lunch with you" was a kind of typographical error for "I shall have dared, etc."

He was simply mixing his tenses and expressing the future perfect in the preterit.

It was no cold-blooded and deliberate murder of the truth. It was a warm-blooded improvisation. He wanted to have Daphne to lunch, and seeing that she was afraid to be alone with him in a crowd, he dragged his mother in as a delicate proof of his good intentions. And his intentions were thoroughly good now.

Having failed to succeed with bad intentions, he had turned traitor to evil

A novel of a girl's experiments with life as it is lived to-day.

By Rupert Hughes

Author of "What Will People Say?" "Empty Pockets" and "Clipped Wings."

and deserted to virtue. Anything to succeed in getting Daphne.

His first problem was to find his mother; his second, to persuade her to play the part he had written for her. He spent several hours searching for her. She was always as busy as a popular débutante, though in some civilizations she would have been débütting into her second childhood.

Duane called at her home and found that she was out. Her old butler told him a dozen places she might be; she might be knitting scarves for Belgian soldiers, or studying skating, or attending a council of the State Board of Suffrage-huntresses, or a Philharmonic concert, or an auction bridge, or a committee on relief for the Polish victims of the war.

Duane could not find her anywhere. While he was following a blind trail, she got into the house and out of her afternoon gown and into her evening gown and out of the house again.

When Duane harked back to her home just too late, the butler could not remember whether she had said she was going to "Götterdämmerung" or the "Follies of 1915," but he felt sure that he had overheard her allude to going to "The Castles in the Air" afterward.

It was beyond midnight when Duane finally ran his mother to ground on a roof garden where she was having a joyous time. She was still breathing a little hard after a fox-trot with a fat railroad

COMMANDMENT

The third of The Red Book's
serials by the foremost
novelist of the day.

Illustrated
by
James
Montgomery
Flagg

president, and they were watching a Russian dancer posture in minimized Greek costume under a very searching searchlight.

Duane regarded his parent with tolerant amusement a moment, then walking up to her, took her by as much of the lobe of her ear as was not occupied by a huge baroque pearl. He said:

"Come home, young woman, and all will be forgiven. You're too young for this sort of thing."

His mother slapped his hand away and said: "Hello, Tomsy! Sit down till this creature gets tired and have a fox-trot with your poor old mother."

"No you don't!" Duane remonstrated. "You can't lead me into your evil ways. I've been hunting for you all over town, singing 'Oh, Where Is My Wandering Ma To-night?' And now I'll take you back while the light still burns in the window."

But she would not be redeemed till she had a dance with her son.

"You know, you dance disgracefully well, young woman," he said, as they skipped and gamboled. "You make a hit with me."

"You don't have to flirt with me," she retorted.

At length she let him lead her to her limousine. She pushed the button that put out the ceiling lamp and taking up an electric cigar-lighter with an asbestos glove gave him fire for the ciga-



DAPHNE KIP, who declared: "I don't belong to Clay Wimburn! or to Tom Duane! or to anybody! I belong to Me! to my Me! My soul's my own and my body's my own and my life is my own. I'm not going to give 'em up to any man. I'm not going to marry anybody."

rette she gave him, and took one for herself from her case.

When Duane said: "You're looking great to-night, Mummy," she sighed: "A great grandmother!" Then she went on: "I've always been thankful to you, Tom, for not marrying and adding a gang of grandchildren to my troubles. You never had much sense about other things, but you've kept out of the clutches of women—and children. But what's on your mind?"

"I'm giving a luncheon to-morrow and you're it."

"To-morrow! Not a chance!"

"You've got to be there."

"Sorry! I'm having some people in."

"Throw 'em out."

"Can't."

"Must—you've got to come with me."

"Not this time, honey! Besides—any luncheon you'd invite me to would be too tame for me to live through."

"Wait till you see her."

"Her? Oh Lord, Tom, you're not going to do anything rash, are you?"

"Whaddaya mean, rash?"

"You'd never invite me to meet a girl unless you wanted me to look her over with a view to adoption."

"Well, maybe not. Better have a peek at her before it's too late. She's a pippin."

"Leave her in the basket, or leave me out of it."

"No, old girl, no! I need you in my business."

"You were hit pretty hard by that other girl—Leila, wasn't it?"

"Yes, Leila Shumway."

"She hit you pretty hard, didn't she?"

"Not half so hard as she hit Bayard Kip when he married her. He saved my life and lost his own."

"You were head over heels in love with her."

"Over heels, but not over head. I was just about chin deep. I've never fallen in deeper than my wisdom-teeth till now."

"You thought that before. You'll think so when the next girl comes along."

"This girl's different. She's the real thing."

"We're all alike, Tom."

"Daphne Kip isn't 'alike.' The rest of you are all grafters, pleasure-hunters, loafers."

"Thanks!"

"Oh, you!—you're the worst I ever saw. But Daphne wants to work."

"Great heavens, Tom, you haven't turned miser, have you? You have money enough to keep any woman better than she deserves."

"Yes, but—well, it's hard to put it the way I feel it, but—you see I don't believe I could ever love the average woman—at least not marrying love."

"What are you afraid of in women?"

"The fact that they are women."

"You're afraid she wouldn't be faithful to you?"

"Lord, no!"

"That you couldn't be to her?"

"Oh, I'd play fair, all right. I think the vast majority of husbands are faithful. If they slip, it's only a stumble. The seventh is a much over-rated commandment. It doesn't cause a tenth of

the wreckage it's credited with, and it doesn't usually get broken at all till after the real trouble has started. What I'm afraid of is the old money microbe."

"So this Daphne of yours is to go on working after she's married?"

"Of course not! I don't begrudge her all I've got. I love to give, but I hate like the very old devil to be sponged on."

"I know that feeling. I can understand it. But what makes you think that this girl won't settle down and graft like the rest?"

"Why, she has ideas. When I got her a job with Reben—"

"Good Lord, an actress!"

"Not a bit of it. As Reben said, she couldn't act enough to keep herself warm. She was the most adorable failure that ever lived. Then she tried other jobs, and I—I've seen quite a lot of her, and I'm daffy about her."

"And is she daffy about you?"

"No, that's the worst of it. She refused to lunch with me, so I invited you, and then she said she would."

"Very interesting," Mrs. Duane yawned. "I'm sorry I can't oblige you both."

"You can! You're going to."

"But I have people invited, important people."

"They can't be half as important to you as I am, and I need you. You never fell down yet when I called for you."

"You blarneyer! Well, I'll see."

Duane had learned from childhood that his mother could never refuse him what he begged for, and her "I'll see" was always as good as her bond. So he helped her into the house and kissed her warmly and said:

"You're the best feller that ever was."

CHAPTER LXI

THE next day Mrs. Duane was at Delmonico's and on time. Daphne was late. Her taxicab had been caught in the Fifth Avenue traffic. Also the Dutilh costume had required a deal of study. Leila had helped her into it, and praised her for it. Leila had even reached the generous height of hoping that she might capture Tom Duane.

"Grab Tom Duane if you can," said Leila. "I was a fool not to take him myself. He has money and always had it. Clay is just getting his. He's as crazy as Bayard. You'll always have to run second with Clay, as I do with Bayard. But with Duane, you'll be first; or if you have a rival, it will be a woman and not a bank account. Go in and win."

Daphne, on the way down, had a curious feeling that Leila's liberality in presenting her with Duane was based on her interest in Wetherell. It was a hateful thought, but it stuck as it slid into her mind.

She found Duane seated on a divan with a brilliant, perfectly gowned woman whose fleecy white hair was like a nun's coif about a very secular face.

Duane rushed forward to greet Daphne and present her. Mrs. Duane gave her a cordial hand-clasp, smiling at Daphne's panting apology:

"I'm unutterably ashamed to be so late. You'll never forgive me."

"I'm obliged to you for a little chat with my son. I don't often get as many words with him."

Daphne felt that she was in the presence of exquisite tact inspired by genuine kindliness. Mrs. Duane had indeed been dealt with kindly by life and she passed the influence along.

AS the two women studied each other in mutual anxiety, Daphne felt that Mrs. Duane was one who had always worn good clothes, eaten excellent food well served, and sipped wines of the best vintages.

Mrs. Duane guessed Daphne as one who had most of life to learn, but approached it with eagerness to get the best of it, yet without a feeling that the world owed her its superlative luxuries and that anything less was robbery.

Mrs. Duane could be merciless in rebuffing those who tried to push into her society or demanded what they could not win by their personal charm. She could not see why a woman of social altitude should be called a snob because she did not open her heart to every outsider who claimed her time and attention. She kept a home—not a hotel. She

asked no more than the smallest town's smallest woman asks: the privilege of choosing her own intimates. She exercised that privilege with a kind of shy sincerity that social strugglers misnamed conceit. The barriers she drew about herself were like the walls about her garden, meant only to keep priers and peerers from ruining the cosiness within.

There is no more variety in the middle class or the farmer class than in the species labelled by the awkward phrase "the New York society woman." People who do not know any or many of her seem to think she is all alike. But she includes every imaginable kind of soul, from vicious youth and age to saintly youth and age. Some of the New York society women know more about farming than some of the farmers' wives. Mrs. Duane did. Some of them are more hospitable, approachable, democratic, simple, sane—and some of them not. Generalization is prevarication. It is hardly safe to say more than that each of us likes what he likes, dislikes what he dislikes, and is more or less frank about it.

She studied Miss Kip with almost more embarrassment than Daphne her, and with perhaps more fear, for if Daphne was on trial as a candidate for social promotion, Mrs. Duane was on trial as a mother-in-law.

Her mother-eyes saw the adoration in her son's manner toward Daphne. She saw how he hung back to pilot Daphne through the tables in the wake of the head-waiter. He quite neglected his mother. There was a symbol and an emphasis in this that did not escape Mrs. Duane. She took it with good sportsmanship. She even praised her successful rival and told her son that he had not overpraised her.

The relations between her and her son were so comradely that Daphne was surprised. She was strangely touched to hear him call her "Mother." It would be hard to say just what Daphne expected him to call her, or what reciprocal emotion she expected to find between them.

Her reading had doubtless given her a common impression that mother-love



JAMIE: MONTGOMERY PLACE

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Duane, as usual, ordered the luncheon without asking his guests any questions. He was rich enough to order a sensible meal. He was evidently not afraid even of the waiter.

Mrs. Duane was there on business. She was shopping as it were for a daughter-in-law. Being a believer in getting her money's worth, she came soon to the point:

"My son tells me that you have ideas, Miss Kip. That rather scared me at first, and I was afraid to meet you, for I haven't two ideas to my back. But now that I have seen how pretty you are and how well you dress— You won't mind my telling you so brutally, will you?—an old woman has some privileges—"

"Oh, Mrs. Duane!"

Mrs. Duane understood the implied protest against the epithet "old," and it pleased her. But she went on:

"Just what are your ideas? Tom has none of his own and can't translate other people's, so I wish you'd tell me yourself."

In spite of her flippancy Mrs. Duane was eager for her son to have a home and a good wife. His chances for happiness would perhaps be better if he selected a wife who would approach him and his people with a little awe from a step below. One who was not jaded by familiarity with the life and the set might find it more amusing, and might be more docile to its ritual, eager to live up to it.

"I was telling Mother about your theories of a woman's independence," Duane explained. "I mused 'em all up. She was interested in knowing what they really are."

"Why, I have no theories," Daphne protested. "I just felt that a girl ought to be able to earn her own living, and have a mind of her own. My father was pretty hard up awhile ago, and

I—I suddenly realized how much of a burden I was to him. And my brother got married and I saw how bored his wife was when he had to be away from her, so I—well, I just thought a woman ought not to be dependent on some man for everything she eats and wears and thinks and does. That's all. And I struck out to try to make my own way, but I couldn't. I hadn't been taught how. And I thought every girl ought to be taught a trade—if you'll forgive the word."

She had read that the word "trade" was anathema to true aristocrats, and she wished she had not used it. But if it shocked Mrs. Duane she did not wince. In fact she smiled on Daphne with a certain deference.

"I agree with you entirely," she said. "I wish I had been taught a trade. Louis XVI was a locksmith, and I think I should have liked to be a horse-breaker, but when I was young the world hadn't rolled around into the sun so far as it has now. So I've had nothing to do in my old age but alternate charity with dissipation. I don't know which bores me more."

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She left them at the table and would not let Tom escort her to the door.

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That was just what Daphne was thinking, but she dodged:

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This was terrifying—to settle one's destiny in Delmonico's! Daphne's heart beat faster than it beat that night on Riverside Drive when Duane's arm had lingered about her shoulders and he left his rain-coat there.

The same instinct of flight stirred her now. She was afraid of him. He mistook the quivering negative of her shaken head for a sign of scorn. It hurt him grievously.

He sighed as Clay Wimburn had sighed the night before when Daphne put aside his big diamond engagement ring. His humility reminded her of Clay, and of her responsibilities to him.

She was dizzy with bewilderment while Duane paid the bill and the tip and took her to a taxicab. They rode to her home in silence, and when he said, "May I come up a minute?" she felt that she had repaid him so ill for his and his mother's hospitality that she could not begrudge him her time.

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CHAPTER LXII

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ITHOUT waiting to be invited in, Duane urged Daphne into the parlor and said, with determination:

"Look here, Miss Daphne Kip, I want to know the worst or the best here and now. I'm going dippy with hope

and despair. If you're planning to throw me down, throw me down now, and I'll do my best to take my medicine. I love you. My mother likes you. She gave me the high sign. We both want you in our family. We'll both try to make you happy. You'll make us both happy, and you'll save my life, if you'll only let me do what I can to make yours happy. I'll be good to you and true to you and I'll worship you forever and ever, Amen. I love you, little Daphne. I just love you to death!"

She stood trembling like an instrument he was playing a tune on—a love-tune that she could not help vibrating to. When he folded his big arms about her, it was as if he embraced a violoncello. She made no more resistance. Indeed, she tried to respond.

When he saw that she did not resist, a throe of rapture shot through him, and he clenched his arms tighter. It seemed wonderful to her that she could thrill this man with such fire. She wondered still more that she felt no answering rapture. Her arms were not stirred to enwrap him.

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But she could not put love into her mouth. She could not requite his kiss. It was as if she were paralyzed. The contact with him was stupidly like the contact with a man in a crowded car. She could not feel even so strongly as to feel annoyance.

Duane, however, was overwhelmed by her negative acceptance, by her failure to make even the playful opposition of coquetry. He took the absence of denial as a triumph. It was enough.

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JAMES HUNTERSON FLAG

Wetherell cried: "Low bridge! Duck pretty heads, ev'body. Whoopee!" They smote the long arms of the barrier with through. Then they crossed the tracks, bumping and jouncing. Daphne and Leila clung its bell, and the scream of the brakes. They



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They

a splitting sound like a sudden lightning. There was a rain of splinters, a crackle of glass in the windshield, and they were to each other, and stared into the blinding headlight of the locomotive, heard the clangor of did not know whether they were alive or dead.

"Of course I will, you angel!" he cried. "I don't mean to scare you or hurry you. Take all the time you need. And so that you won't have any extra prejudice to overcome, I'll take myself out of your sight and hearing."

He encircled her with his arms again and groaned in ecstasy: "Angel! My God, but I do adore you!"

Then he took up his hat and stick and tiptoed out as from a church.

DAPHNE, left alone, dropped into a chair and took counsel with her soul, wondering at it and its perverseness.

She had been translated into the cloudy realm she had always looked up to. She had been offered a home aloft there where the enviable inhabitants dwelt in a serene superiority to the money-grubbing groundlings. She could put on the plumage of the demi-goddesses and be intimate with the elect.

If she married Clay she would have all her career to make. Clay and she had narrowly escaped from poverty to the next lowest grade of the new-rich. If she married Clay they would hunt a more or less expensive apartment and fill it with more or less costly furniture, all of it varnish-new. Their friends would be other strugglers of the same set, new-rich or worse.

Clay would be working all day long every day and he would worry about his work all through his leisure hours, just as Leila had said he would, just as Leila had learned that Bayard did and always would.

She understood for a moment why Leila liked Wetherell—because those Englishmen knew what it was to take money for granted, and to use it as a means of comfort, not the be-all and end-all of existence.

Duane had come to love her. His

mother had smiled on her and asked her to be friends with her. The great Duane and his greater mother! It was wonderful.

What was the matter with her that she did not respond to all that cordiality with as much or more? What ailed her that she could hear the humble prayer of Tom Duane and not fling her arms about him and thank him and heaven for flattering her? This beggar girl was in doubt as to accepting her Cophetuation.

She had actually stood like a numb wooden doll while Duane embraced her! She had asked for more time! She had given him a cold cheek for his lips, a paralyzed mouth and a paralyzed heart!

Her eyes roved the shabby room he asked her to give up for the mansion he would take her to. Her lip curled in disgust at it—at the prim simplicity that made the best of its poverty, at the severity of arrangement that tried to give form to barrenness.

She saw the phonograph, the sole musical implement of that Spartan interior. She sniffed. Then she flushed. It brought

back to her suddenly the memory of the evening when she and Clay Wimburn, jailbirds of poverty, had made a pitiful ballroom of the narrow place.

She flushed a deeper crimson, for she remembered the turbulence that had made chaos of that dance. Her side ached with memory of Clay's arm about it. Her lips stung with the recollection of Clay's kisses.

Clay had been potent enough to send her heart whirling as dizzily as a little red top. He had made her blaze when Duane had left her calm. Duane offered her velvet and Wimburn fire. It was luxury from without against luxury from within. That must mean something. She wondered what it meant. She was not so proud of her fire and her inflammability as she might well have been, but she

Remember—

"The Sins of The Children"

a brilliant novel

by Cosmo Hamilton

begins in the next—the June—
issue of The Red Book Maga-
zine, on the news-stands May 23rd.

Continued on page 193 of this issue.

IF one aspires to consideration as a hero "back o' the yards," one must be a fellow of action. Monk Magee's "old man" realized that, and tried to play up to his rôle.



Monk Magee's "Old Man"

By Jack Lait

Author of "Help Wanted."

HITTING a man with one's fist is sadly out of vogue, but it is still done now and then. Did you ever consider the psychology of a wallop? Fancy yourself striking your banker or your brother-in-law or your dearest enemy. Your knuckles would break his skin, leave a mark, stagger him. But would that be all? Would it end there? Isn't fist-fighting a mysterious undertaking which holds behind society's barriers against it a psychology far beyond physical pains and bruises? A man may curse you, cross you, revile your honor; you let it pass or make reprisal at leisure. But if that man double his fist, double his elbow and let fly closed hand against your person, you reach for a gun, or kick him wherever you can reach him, or have the law on him.

Unquestionably, the civilization of to-

ILLUSTRATED BY
DEAN CORNWELL

day is bitterly and almost unanimously set against persons who hit other persons.

The blow is viewed as an outrage. Many who have the courage to dare everything else shudder at striking another and shrink from being punched, though, as I have said, the plain biff isn't in itself a seriously dangerous form of attack. A man who breaks his wife's heart is treated facetiously in the prints; a man who breaks his wife's face is a brute, a fiend and a cur, and gets a sentence of ninety days.

Still, there is an undeniable romance about the fist-fighter. The principal testimony for that statement you may find in those of your friends who swaggeringly, and usually inaccurately, tell you how they thrashed a conductor, an insulter of women or an offending corner-bully. Most men would have it believed, though their sedentary habits, their gen-

eral get-up and their timorous careers belie them, that they are hairy-chested, two-fisted demons who fight while the hat is dropping. Such liars have never especially appealed to me. Maybe that's why I took such a fancy for Monk Magee.

"The Monk" had a rare faculty, reflected in a pansy modesty and apologetic equivocation, wherefore and whichwith he side-stepped the subject of his frequent and bloody mixups. It was his business to jolt tough huskies, and he went about his business in a freehanded, swinging manner that was exhilarating. But he never balyhooed about it. When cornered with the goods of a duty well done he fumbled about for extraneous and prolix circumstances to dull the gleam of his clear-cut workmanship.

In his hours of play, "The Monk" frequented the stockyards police-station, where I made headquarters in my hours of work as a reporter. Sometimes I took him along on news assignments; oftener I was his guest at Skelly's Gardens, where he officiated nights—as official bouncer.

"The Monk" had a quaint philosophy of right and wrong that was all his own, mined from an American faith that gents shouldn't horn in who couldn't fight their way out. He deplored the need of knocking a boob cold, but that such need there was he never questioned. When he felt me sounding him he wouldn't go on at all. When I wheedled narrative from him without exposing my appetite for his naïve viewpoints he told on, always deploring the circumstances. I had his coyness disarmed enough to quizz him about the "Slovak Jan" Spiewack affair, which was a fierce piece of business, I was told. It happened in Skelly's Gardens' dance-pavilion and wound up in Mercy Hospital.

"Hit him hard?" I asked disinterestedly.

"Well, he was pretty soused," "The Monk" parried.

"Never did like him, did you?" I pushed along.

"Sure I did—he's a good lad."

"Then—"

"Well, I'll tell ye. I t'rew 'im out We'n's'd'y night an' Frid'y night becuz

he got spiffy-eyed an' couldn't dance on his feet more'n half the time. He got pretty raw, an' I run 'im. Sat'd'y night he was rubbin' Skelly's bar when I come in. He stuffed up a lot o' Skelly's squirrel whisky. You know dat juice—goes down like barbwire, got a kick like benzine an' every time it slops over the glass it eats a knot out o' the bar. It's the only booze them slaughter-house boys wants. If Skelly won't give it to 'em dey fights; if he does dey fights. Well, Jan got good an' loaded up an' den he remembers I told him to stay out o' the pavilion. So he comes in. He looks around fer me an' I'm across the floor. So he starts.

"Well, he's a good lad, an' I like 'im. So, when he gets over to me I wheel 'im one quick before he can open his head, becuz if I let 'im pull one crack he'd 'a' called me somethin' an' I'd 'a' had to kill 'im."

There you have it—as Christian a job as ever was recorded by the pen of an angel, in one punch.

"And when he came to?" I pursued.

"Well, he come to in the alley. An' den he didn't say nothin'."

It didn't sound human. I knew Jan.

"He didn't say a word to Skelly? Or the cops that took him away?" I persisted.

"No—an' he aint pulled a squawk yet."

Not yet? Three days. I looked quizzically at "The Monk" and shook my head.

"I broke 'is jaw," said "The Monk" without passion.

As a matter of fact, I learned later, Jan had a knife in his hand when he went down, had loudly sworn for two days that he would cut "The Monk's" heart out, and had liquored up specially for that job. "The Monk" just left those things out of the story.

Now, how could a man help loving "The Monk"? How could a man who wore spectacles, wrote for a living and had to spend his Sundays calling on his aunts, resist his spell? I never missed a Saturday night at Skelly's Gardens, where he sat in a corner of the "pavilion," always watching the spielers, always on the job, excusing himself now



"So, when he gets over to me I wheel 'im one quick, before he can open his head."

and then to cross the floor and interject a suggestion to a celebrant who gripped his lady too openly, or to collar a pair of wranglers and bump their heads together in the name of peace and quiet.

"The Monk" was a back-o'-the-yards product. There are brickyards as well as stockyards in Chicago. The brickyards are back of the region back of the stockyards. The stratum between, the capital and plaza of which is Skelly's Gardens, is the pasture of the Irish vandal from the kilns as well as the retreat of the Hun from the cattle-pens. Not that the Irish frequented Skelly's—only behind the bar and in other official stations, such as "The Monk's." The foreigners did the patronizing; the Irish bossed the works and licked transgressors, except on election-day, when they told them how to vote, as is the *modus* in American metropoli, I believe.

Everybody knew "The Monk." Everybody called him just "Monk." I heard once that his baptismal name was Roger, but that doesn't sound right and I mention it merely as Noah Webster did, to perfect the record, on terms of obscure and suspicious origin, usually tailed with a parenthetical fling as follows: "(Not used.)" Therefore we shall dismiss the quotation-marks henceforth and refer to him as Monk, making it unanimous.

THEY thought pretty well of Monk there and thereabouts. Skelly liked him because he was a master-craftsman who always brought home the bacon with as little fuss and interruption of the pastime as was politic. The butchers liked him because he wasn't officious, never bully-ragged them, hit clean and never used the boots, and slammed only disturbers. The girls adored him because—but is there need to detail why? He was graceful, well-featured, kissed with the perfect Caucasian attributes so fascinating to the tawny Slavs, a person of authority and discretion, an unmailed Launcelot in the fray. Why more?

But there was more. There was a potent charm beyond all these obvious items. Monk looked him neither to the right nor to the left. Never had he smiled upon Lizzie nor to Katka. Never

had he "made a play" for the fairest of the can-wrappers. They had turned eye on him in brazen invitation; they had asked him to dance—and he had, with never an extra squeeze or false move beyond the business of an employee accommodating a patron.

And that was why the Packingtown girls sighed for the Monk. Yes, that was why they called him "The Monk"—because of his celibate consistency, his incredible Gibraltar resistance against feminine attack from all quarters. He was friendly enough, but exasperatingly impartial. Here was a neutral knight, jousting for the sex, not for one damosel. At four of a Sunday morning he broke her gallant's jaw; at six he encountered her at mass, she smiled, he looked over her head. It was aggravating, but it was fascinating.

I couldn't peg him myself. I studied and pondered. And, finally, I asked him. He smiled, and again it seemed that he didn't smile. Then he dropped off his stool, drew himself up beside me, put his arm around my shoulder and unbosomed.

"You never seen my ol' lady, did ye?" he began.

I hadn't.

"Well, den I'll tell ye. My divvy is four dollars a week out o' de fifteen I take down. I never open my envelop. I take it home to de ol' lady. She locks it up an' every day she gives me half a dollar, excep' Sund'ys she slips me a buck. I buy my own clothes out o' my end an' I walk two miles from de shanty to de joint an' back every night."

"Well, how—why—" I tried to express it, but couldn't.

"Ye see," he said, "I got two little sisters an' four little brothers. My old man is doin' a stretch in Joliet fer bein' a sucker an' standin' lookout on a safe-blowin' job. The old lady can't do washin' no more; she aint so young no more. If I don't keep de family, who will? Ye see dem plumes on dat Polack chicken's hat? What dem cost 'd feed us a month.

"Ye see, de old man done eight years startin' a mont' before I was born. Den dey sprung 'im for good behavior an' we had six more kids. Den he went back. It aint been so rotten since he went down

de road, but it's close steerin'. De kids aint got nobody but me an' dey gotta go to school. A guy can't t'row down his own people, so I aint got no out. See?"

I said I saw.

"Maybe ye do an' maybe ye don't," he responded. "Dere's a lot o' nice dolls what I guess maybe'd loaf aroun' wit' me. But what's de use? If a guy trails wit' one of 'em he's got to feed 'er an' take 'er to teayters an' buy 'er a lot o' junk. I can't do it an' I wont try no other system. An', to make things tougher, de ol' man's comin' out to-morro'."

"That'll help," I suggested cheerfully.

Monk shot me a glance, half pity, half amusement.

"Ye think it will?" he said. "Say—he's as much help as a broken leg. Las' time I went down to Joliet to see 'im he was shot wit' de con—one lung wit' de angels an' de other wingin' fast. He said he was dyin'—to get out—an' get a snoot full o' rye. He's gonna be a ray o' sunshine aroun' de Magee mansion, he is. But—he's my ol' man—so whatde 'ell—?"

Somehow I wanted to see that meeting between that father and that son, and I suggested that I'd go along with Monk to the State pen.

"Dey spring de ol' man at ten—dat's pretty early—for you," Monk bandied.

"I'll leave with you for Joliet at nine." I insisted, and it was so ordered.

WE reached the "big house" with five minutes to spare. At the end of that time, up the long corridor there shambled a figure, clad in prison-made citizen's clothes, treading on squeaky, new, prison-made shoes, holding a crusher hat in his

right hand and a bundle wrapped in newspaper in his left. His eyes were on the tile of the floor. The Monk watched

him till he was a foot away. Then he took a gingerly step toward center and said "Hello." The figure stopped dead still and looked around, shivering. It answered with a husky whisper of a rusty voice, "Hello." The Monk took its arm between his thumb and finger and we traversed to the gate, three abreast—two men and the Monk's father.

At the Archer Limits, the alley entrance to Chicago, we left the interurban car which had carried us from Joliet. The Monk helped his father to the ground:

"Want a drink?" he asked him.

"I got money," whispered the old man. And he pulled out a ten-dollar bill, the State's new start in life to the freed felon.

The Monk led him into the saloon and bought him a shot of liquor. Then we made for a local car and they got off soon afterward. I went on to the police-station where I daily found, forgot and imagined news.

My mind wasn't on business all day. I couldn't get "Red" Magee out of my head. The man was a living whimper. There was no soul at all. I knew his history—and he looked it. He had been a brick-maker in his youth, but he fell for nickel whisky. He lost his job. He was a husky man then, and when

he hit a bartender for refusing him a drink "on the cuff" he killed him. They sent him to Joliet for fourteen years. He served eight. Monk was born a month after he started away. His mother did washing and they lived.



"He's gonna be a ray o' sunshine aroun' de Magee mansion."

"Red" came home and went back to the brickyards.

The shanty gang in that region has phases other than those immortalized by Finley Peter Dunne. "Red" Magee's associates included some pretty bad boys. Tim Whalen was worse than that. He had cracked a safe in Altoona and had done his bit. Whalen and Magee had cracked a bottle or two and then it came out that Tim had his eyes on the treasury of an undertaker hard by. What with the rye and Whalen's persuasive and authoritative confidences and the promise of several hundred dollars, Magee said he'd take a chance. Find me an ex-convict of his class who wouldn't.

Magee was to be the "outside man" while Whalen nitroglycerined the safe. They met in the saloon, put in some drinks and started. Whalen jimmied the door and was inside at work. Magee was at the threshold, outside, engaged mainly in peeping in to see how his pal was progressing. A woman with insomnia, across the alley, saw him and thought it didn't look right; so she slipped down and told a policeman two blocks away. He sneaked up on Magee and had him by the collar before he had a chance to turn his back. Whalen heard the racket and made his get-away through a window. Magee got twenty years. Twelve years or so later he had completed his time, less allowances, and his son and I had convoyed him back to the city of his vicissitudes.

I saw a note on the police-bulletin that night, notifying detectives and patrolmen that "Red" Magee, murderer and safeblower, had been released and was "probably in Chicago and in his old haunts around Archer Avenue;" that he should be watched and asked for an account of himself whenever encountered. I smiled at his titles. He had cracked a skull in a saloon argument while drunk. He had played the boob for a clumsy bungler trying to rob a morgue. He had come forth blinking, gasping, hollow, bent and emasculated. Yet the police were taking him seriously. It was a fact that he had served terms for two of the most desperate classes of crimes in the book; it was a dull night. A hunch! Why not?

Yes—why not? None of the other reporters would think of it. I had been to the prison to see him reëmerge into society—the society which every newspaper so fanatically protects—and his alias was the goods for headlines, so short, so snappy, so punchy. I did it.

It went down as an historic piece of nifty reporting. It hit the front page. It had none of the atmosphere that I give you in all Masonic confidence in these pages. Nix. It was the story of "Red" Magee, the last of the safe-blowers, bristling with a past too heinous to relate in full (the safest and most effective sum-up when the facts aren't sufficiently illuminating), released — and "shooting square." That was the inspiration—an interview in which this infamously famous criminal bared, for the readers of my paper exclusively, his chest, upon which he had borne through his years of durance a resolve to abjure misdoings to the end of his days. He hadn't said so to me, but one can't libel anybody putting promises of virtue and righteousness into the mouth of a prison-rat.

The story reviewed the decadence of safe-blowing as a profession. It told how all the famous robbers of this type had died and with them had gone, probably forever, the fine art of drilling holes in burglar-proof steel and "slipping the soup." Yes, all were dead—"Germany" Schlichter, the Marson brothers, "Dick" Lane, Ferrett Fowler—all, except "Red" Magee. It was a beautiful story. It got me a little raise, in fact.

That the Monk mightn't like the spread occurred to me. I loved him, I pitied him and I had no wish to wound him or to harm him. But, where was ever newspaper man who wouldn't double-cross a pal for a front-page column?

Anyway, the results were electric. Everybody read the story. One minister preached an impromptu sermon on it that made his flock weep. My paper followed it with an editorial on the futility of wrongdoing and the progress of mankind toward the ultimate. The story was published on Sunday morning. I saw the Monk Sunday evening. I was a bit timorous until he shook his head and said something about never being able

to peg a newspaper guy. I knew he didn't like it, but I figured he'd get over it when the effects of the story wore off.

On Monday an automobile drove up to the Magee cottage and a woman entered the house. Mrs. Magee was serving luncheon to the youngsters. She came to the door, wiping her hands on her apron. The visitor, whose appearance, as well as her automobile, had already gathered a little crowd about the door, inquired after "Red."

"He's over in Slavin's," said the wife.

"Slavin's?" quizzed the visitor.

"Yes—down the next corner—that saloon there."

The visitor shot her a surprised, picked-on look, turned and walked, re-entered her car and rattled away, down the rough street. Mrs. Magee's children as well as the smudgy brats who had gathered and heard were equally at a loss to understand why the woman had come, what she had wanted or why or whither she had fled. An hour later another car stopped at the door. This time a man rang Mrs. Magee's bell. He told her his wife had called, but there must be some misunderstanding; that his wife was the secretary of the Welfare League, a body dedicated to the fostering of Christianity and militant patronage of the ten commandments; that she had desired to hold converse with and give moral courage to "Red" for his new page.

Mrs. Magee referred him to Slavin's, saying he would find the subject of his concern there and could talk to him if the booze hadn't settled too hard as yet. The visitor raised his eyebrows.

"Yes," he equivocated, rubbing his chin. "But I thought—"

"Oh, ye did?" cut in Mrs. Magee.

"Well, so did the lunkhead what wrote that crazy stuff in that newspaper what I hear so much over." And she went in and slammed the door.

But the good folk of Chicago were not to be cheated of their prodigal as easily as that. Many callers came, and one who arrived about Thursday, before "Red" had arisen, found the old man sober and patted him on the back and praised his good resolutions and gave him heart-cheer and told him he would yet live to

be an honored figure in the community. And, to the amazement of Mrs. Magee, her spouse, instead of laughing at the absurd premises of the whole foolish proposition, fell in with the stranger's kind intentions; said he had sickened of crime and would die on the level if the world could forget his transgressions. That wasn't the way he told it, but that was the meat of it. Good heavens! "Red" believed it himself.

Those who write for newspapers get to know that human failing. Picture a man as a fool, and he shrieks to high heaven, whether it's true or not. Picture him as a hero, and he believes it though he knows it isn't so.

"Red," who had come out of Joliet with probably not a single corpuscle astir to any purpose or ambition, was easily tricked into saying that he would accept any sort of honorable work. He had said it in my phoney interview, where he had said moreover that through the long, hard years of prison and penitence, as he had sat in his drear cell, he had set his eyes toward the redemption—wound his metamorphosed heart around one welling dream—to make reparation to society for his foul crimes and give to the world, in as far as one saved in the evening of a misspent life could, the endeavors of his declining years toward undoing what he had done. As I told you, that interview was a pippin.

As a matter of fact, what "Red" had thought in the hours of solitude—if anything—was that the world had never given him a square break, and that if he ever got out he hoped that some day some one would kill a copper where he could see it done.

However, when men receive a fellow-traveler back from perdition they don't argue with him. So the welfare workers to a man rallied 'round "Red" Magee to aid him in his Christian purpose. He was too old to go back to the brickyards. Nobody wanted to give him light work in his own place—helping a squared crook was one thing, having him around where he could be seen was another. So they delivered their commission and dodged personal contact by chipping in for a horse and wagon and setting "Red" up in the moving and delivery business.

I walked by one day and saw him sleeping on the seat. I think he had been guzzling. The express industry wasn't very bullish just then. Anyway, I got another idea — worth twenty dollars.

Next day I came to the spot with our staff photographer. I asked "Red" whether he would get on the wagon and pose for

a picture. Would he? He knew me in a minute—I was the cause of his fame, his elevation, his reformation—everything. So we woke up the horse and took pictures. "Red" offered to tell me some of the black and scarlet details of his years of many crimes, but I excused myself. I had to write them—it wouldn't do to listen to "Red," because my imagination was better than his. The plot was to write a full-page feature-story and sell it to a Sunday syndicate. The photographs made it stand up.

Here was the *Monte Cristo* and yet the *Abou ben Adhem* of criminals—with the red blood of a murdered victim and the nitroglycerin of desperate safe-robberies on his hands—shown by the incontrovertible camera pursuing honest labor, driving his slow and brick-strewn path to salvation from the seat of a wagon that expressed trunks and his reformation. If I couldn't write enough hot copy to make up a page around those pictures a lot of people who thought I threw a nasty typewriter-finger were crazy. I wrote that story after I finished my regular work—some time between five and seven next morning. The editor of the syndicate almost kissed me.

The page was flashed in some forty cities two or three Sundays later, including the foremost position in the feature-



As a matter of fact, what "Red" had thought in the hours of solitude was that if ever he got out he hoped that some day some one would kill a copper where he could see it done.

section of a Chicago paper. Eight or nine persons who didn't count much laughed, and about a million who counted like all possessed reawakened to the romantic presence in their community of this red hand of crime, turned into the lily mitt of honest toil by a revulsion of heart. It was beautiful. It was hung up on the mirror of Slavin's, back of the bar, and "Red" was fêted where, in harder days, he had been footed. His eye was beginning to take on a gleam again. Nobody ever saw him deliver a load in the gift-wagon. But there it stood, and people pointed it out and school kids patted the horse on the nose. Kids back o' the yards are skeptical and irreverent kids—on general topics such as science, metaphysics and fractions. But on safe-blowing, kids the world over are enthusiasts and devotees. I don't suppose that in all the weeks "Red" came and went to and from his throne upon that wagon a single hunk of mud was ever shied at him. And that means something around Archer Avenue.

When pressed for reminiscences, "Red" spoke freehandedly and with a generosity of detail which, if not plausible, was voluble. The few who knew him in the old days and remembered him as a brickmaker who hadn't really been a self-made criminal, but who was sort of

pushed into distinction by a lavish and unaided fate, were hushed and told to shut their traps. What mattered what they remembered? The newspapers had certified this man to be a desperado and a safe-destroying demon. Newspaper stuff affects the persons who read in the same strange manner that it dethrones the equilibrium of those of whom it reads. Few are there who deny or even doubt. "I saw it in the papers," and that settles that.

There came a preacher—a sort of gutter gospel-monger of yellow and raucous order—and he held open revivals. To him came the Napoleonic idea of bringing the famous ex-arch-criminal. "Red" Magee, to testify. He found Magee and gave him four dollars and took him to the meeting. He wound up, raised his oratorical ball over his head, held the mob a moment in suspense and let 'er fly—he produced "Red" Magee. It went over the plate. The crowd shouted and hurrahd.

"Tell the brothers and sisters, brother, how you renounced sin after you had wallowed in its slimy depths; tell the brothers and sisters how you were washed in the blood of the Lamb. Tell them, O my brother."

"Red" hesitated, stalled, coughed, tried to talk but flopped. It looked as though the headliner were about to flicker and flivver. Gently the blue-sky pulpiter crooned to him:

"Tell them, my brother—tell them, that they may this night cast out their sins as you did yours." And he whispered to him: "Take off your hat."

"Red" fumblingly removed his hat and began again to begin. A wheezy sound came forth; there was hope. He choked, then spat—and out it came—right over the footlights.

"Fellow brothers," he said, "I never made no speech like this afore an' so I—I never made no speech like this afore. W-w-what this here minister-guy says is right. I wuz a tough son of a gun. I killed a bartender wid a beerglass and I done my bit. In the stir I met a lot o' old-timers what 'ad did big jobs, an' all dey talked about was how dey was goin' to croak de judges what settled 'em an' how dey was goin' to secon'-story an'

bust safes an' take suckers when dey got out. Well, when I gets out I'm marked by de bulls an' dey're set to keep me crooked like dey always does. So I couldn' get no honest labor an' I blew a crib. An' den I got me a pal, a guy what was by de name o' Cateye Monahan, and Monahan an' me we done gunwork an' lead-pipe work, an' we boosted t'ousan's o' dollars. An' den dey nails Cateye an' I gives de flatfoots a battle an' I gets away. An' I goes to Omaha an' I hooks up wit' a Dutch gun what was called by de name o' Ludwig. Dem Dutch is de toughest Dutchmen in town when dey're good an' tough. An' dis guy Hartwig he was de gamest long-chance shooter I ever buckled wit'. Well.—"

The audience was listening spell-bound. But the act was getting long and getting nowhere. So the reverend exhorter plucked "Red" by the sleeve.

"Tell them of your redemption—never mind the details," he whispered.

"I'm comin' to that," said "Red," now wound up and going. "I was goin' to tell ye how we stuck up a lot o' saloons an' how Ludhart got plugged by de coppers an' got soaked for life. I think he's out now an' workin' in Noo Orleans. Anyway, I aint got much time so I'll tell ye. Well, a pal what I trusted trun de hooks in me right here in Chicago an' I was nailed on a sweet safe-blowin' job an' Judge Raymond slips me twenty. It was dis stretch when it come to me to go square if I ever beat de stretch. So when I shakes hands wit' de warden he says to me, 'Magee, remember.' An' I says, 'Don't kid yerself—I'll never turn a crooked trick again, not for a million coppers,' an' I come back here to Chicago an' now—"

The impatient chairman of the pious shindig took heart. He rubbed his hands and shouted out, "Ah, yes—and now!"

"An' now," said the "Red," shooting his boss an annoyed look, "I'm off de hull works an' I'm drivin' a horse an' wagon, an' I'm here for to tell ye that this here life o' crime don' get nobody nuttin'."

The preacher leaned over and whispered into "Red's" ear:

"Your redemption — redemption — remember?"

"Oh, yes," said Magee. "I was comin' to that. An' now I'm workin' for de Lord an' I'm happy. When I was workin' for de devil, did I have a horse an' wagon? No. When I was workin' for de devil, did I have my pitchers in de papers an' did I have rich guys comin' aroun' for to see how I was gettin' by? No. What was I when I was workin' for de devil? A crook—a long-time con'. Is dere anything in dis workin' for de devil? No—t'ell wit' 'im."

Monk Magee was in the crowd. He gripped "Red" by the arm and dragged him home. I was there, too. I was "covering" it for my paper. The Monk turned to me and said, without his usual affability: "Dat nut stuff o' yours 'll drive my ol' man to de insane asylum yet. He'll be chasin' his thumb, sure as ye're standin' on dem feet. Ye got 'im believin' all dem pipes an' braggin' an' tryin' to tell me an' de ol' lady what a world-beater he was. He says he done all dem jobs an' we didn' know it—I didn' know it, what dragged him home every night when he was so stewed it was leakin' out of 'is ears. I tell ye, ye're drivin' my whole family dip', an' I wish ye'd cut it out."

I couldn't. I wrote that story, and so did every other reporter there.

Soon afterward there was a punk little safe-blowing on the North Side, and half a dozen city editors hit the same inspired idea the same hour—to interview "Red" Magee on it. We went out to see him in a body and he stayed only for one more drink before he came with us, eagerly. We took him to the scene and half a dozen cameras clicked at the same time when half a dozen photographers got a simultaneous ray—to get "Red" Magee standing before the ruins of the dismantled safe. There were a couple of stupid detectives mauling over the wreckage and they, of course, horned into focus, which made it better—"Red"

Magee aiding the police in the solution of a crime on which he is the world's foremost authority. The posing finished, "Red" struck a wise look, picked up a piece of the shattered steel door, looked it over, tossed it aside, turned and said to us all, assembled:

"Freeman—Slivers
Freeman—dat's de
guy what done it.
I know 'is work."



He found himself
slipping from the
peak of his notoriety.

I looked through all the police-records, but could find no Freeman. However, that meant nothing. "Red" had spoken, and next day the verdict of our village oracle on safe-demolition made good reading.

After that, for some time, "Red" stayed out of print. Several weeks went by and he found himself slipping from the peak of his notoriety.

One night I was sitting on the sergeant's desk in the police-station, exchanging roughhouse observations with

a flycop or two, when I heard voices near the door. A uniformed patrolman had a man by the collar and was hustling him toward the door.

"Get out o' here, ye barrelhouse rat, or I'll—" the bluecoat was bullying, but I waited for no more. I flipped off the desk, ran across the room and rescued "Red" Magee from getting his hat clubbed into his skull. At my solicitation, which was not to be lightly denied in that station, the policeman dropped Magee to the floor, wiped his hand on his fatigue-coat and said: "All right, but take that piece o' cheese out o' here. Him a safe-blower! Him a gun! Say—dat bum couldn't stick his hand in a empty barrel widout turnin' in a riot call." And he slipped his club back in his belt. "Red" picked himself up and he looked after that copper with a look I couldn't understand—then. I walked out with him and he soon came down to cases. He had come to complain—had come to seek me out and learn why his name had been dropped from the public prints; why he had become obsolete and forgotten when a city longed for stories of him. Why had I got cold feet?

I looked at the wrecked fake before me and couldn't restrain my laughter. It was then that it first dawned on me just how seriously this timorous ass had come to take himself—his printed glory, his counterfeit past, his spurious present. I told him I'd see what I could do about it. But I did nothing. There was nothing to do. Unless some unusual and unforeseen circumstance came up again, in which a reporter could chuckle in his vest yet thrill a multitude by centering copy again on the "Red," one couldn't just chronicle the fact that he still existed and get it by an editor. So I forgot "Red."

I met the old man after that and he lapelled me. He was even more insistent and bitter than that night in the station. He let out to me that there were those who were openly taking issue with stories of his malodorous past and he called upon me, who knew how true they were, to blaze forth again the red deeds of "Red" Magee across the page of history. "Dey don't hardly believe me nuttin' no more," he said, pathetically.

I was quite moved, and decided that on some fruitless night when space was liberal I would slip in a story with some subterfuge to justify it, and heal the old lunatic's heart. But weeks went by, and I never got around to it.

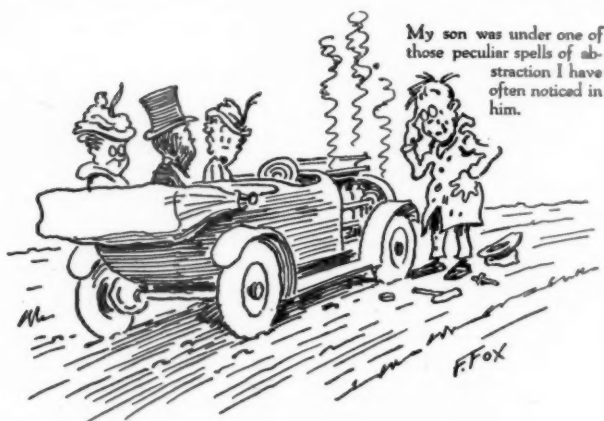
ABOUT a month before the anniversary of "Red's" release, when I had planned to revive the romantic chronicles of "Red" Magee,—in the dead of winter it was,—I sat again with my feet dangling from the sergeant's desk in the precinct-house. Of a sudden, there came the most terrific crash that ever my ears had heard. It was as though a bomb had hit at our feet and the detonation reverberated and rocked the building about us.

We were on our toes, out of the station on the run. Hundreds were running past us to a building not half a block away, before which was piled a mass of shattered, scattered, battered glass, demolished brick and twisted débris. The police forced their way through, and I mine behind them.

It had been a laundry a few minutes before. There was no mistaking what had happened. The puny safe that had stood in the corner of the outer room had been blasted with a charge sufficient to sink a battleship. It had torn out the whole front of the building, taking with it everything about it. It was a butcher-job, done by a tyro who had picked an impecunious washery, fifty yards from a police-station, to do his bungling.

The police surrounded the bombarded wreck and went through its remains. No trace of anyone did they find. One detective was making his way through a passage blown through the side wall when his foot touched something soft, yielding and creepy. He got a lantern and a shovel. I held the lantern; he messed around with the spade. We found a shoe. I kicked it. It was occupied. Due north and upward from the shoe, which even to a detective was a guide to something, he scraped and uncovered—the body of a man. We turned it over and I brought my lantern beside the face. One look was plenty. There was enough of it left to tell. It was "Red" Magee.

THE confession of the moral decline of a professor of psychology who allowed himself to be induced to buy a car.



The New Carburetor

By Wilbur Hall

Author of "Psychology—and a 1910 Model."

I AM a new man, and I have had my beard trimmed. No longer than this morning I astounded the serious young people in my class in Psychology IIB by making a little joke.

I seem suddenly to have awakened to a realization of the fact that life is not all Kant and Munsterberg and ideation and causation and reaction. I have asked my wife to accompany me next Monday night to a presentation of a theatrical spectacle called, I believe, "The Idiosyncrasies of 1915," or some such title. My son, Wesley Bones Stitt, recommends it, and my daughter refers to it as "that panorama of ugly legs and beautiful bodices," and giggles hysterically when my wife and I discuss the treat that is before us.

I only mention this to indicate the extent of the spiritual renaissance effected in me by the past few months, during which time I have been the owner of a motor-car.

ILLUSTRATED
BY F. FOX

I lay it all, observe, to the motor-car. As a man of science—as Henderson Professor of Applied Psychology in Wesley College—I may be pardoned, I hope, for thus placing the responsibility. I am inclined, when I attend faculty meetings, or consult with the reverend and cultured gentleman who is president of our little institution, to blush for myself, and for some of the things that I have recently done. Conceive of the horror with which I picture a revelation to President Witherspoon, of myself in a low place some miles from the city receiving instruction in a form of dance from a young cabaret lady! Or of another young lady—I assure them both, or all, to be entirely respectable, though playful and even frivolous—patting the bald place of which I am usually somewhat sensitive, and calling me "Old Wooglums."

While I submit that there is nothing inherently harmful in these unconven-

tionalties, I know that my mention of them thus autobiographically, as I may say, requires an explanation from a person of my position and usual habits.

The explanation is our motor-car.

IT was but a short time ago that I was induced by my family to purchase an automobile, but now we have our second one, and are, as children say in speaking of their ages, "going on" three.

My wife, of whom you may have heard as honor pupil of the class of 1888, Miss Sedgewick's Select School for Young Ladies, near Philadelphia, when she was Miss Amaranth Bones, was not the sort of woman I should have thought of, before my original research in the psychology of automobile-owning began, as a motor-maniac. A few short weeks in the Harford, 1910 model, which was our first, and a few short months in the Transland, Model 42, which is our second, have served to develop in her a species of caste consciousness of which I have heard our Professor Moses Moses, Brewer Chair of Economics, speak with the most bitter and scathing denunciation. (The Moseses do not own a car.) Mrs. Stitt, my estimable wife, has dropped her quieter charities, and has become third vice-president-at-large of the Society for the Amelioration of Conditions in the Trenches. A very fashionable group of women comprise this body, and I believe that it is partly this that has led Mrs. Stitt to become so active and pressing in her demands that we have a car with a detachable limousine body.

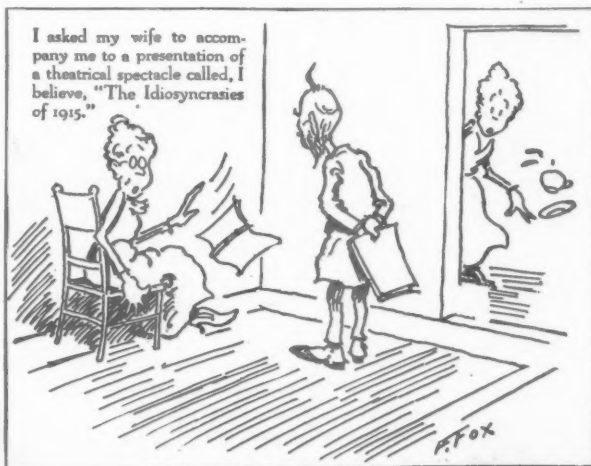
My daughter, Patricia, always was a modern, in the freest sense of the word, and for many years her independence of the more staid conventions distressed me. She is called "Pats" by her intimates—a sobriquet which was once rather offensive

to me—and I can give no clearer picture of the girl's tendencies of thought and speech than to quote her explanation of the nickname.

I had remonstrated with her about it, on one occasion, and expressed a dignified disapprobation of its acceptance by her. "Why are you called so, my dear?" I asked.

"Simple as a shiny nose, Dad," she replied promptly, with her usual flippancy. "Pats rhymes with 'hats,' which I adore; 'bats,' on which I am going when I'm of age; 'cats,' which all my detractors unquestionably are; and 'rats,' which is the most expressive word in the American language. 'Pat' is also a good, Irish, fighting man's name, and on the fight I'm equal to any two Irishmen when I'm worked up. *Videlicet*—if that's it—Pats! See? And speaking of hats, Dad, if I don't get a new dress for Madge Whiffen's dance, I'm going in a pair of your pajamas to spite you. What do you say to a perfect dream at Madame Wright's for the measly little sum of thirty-two fish? Huh?"

Pajamas! Pardon my mentioning it, but I do it solely in my anxiety to show you, out of her own mouth, how intensely modern my daughter Patricia is, and has always been.... Now that I think of it, though, why should I blush at the mention, in cold type, of sleeping wear, who have joined in the dance at my



age, and in my position, a young lady, albeit respectable, who sings songs about "That Wiggly Rag" and "Oh, You Cuddle-up Kid," in public eating places? Put in that way—

THE fourth member of our family is the one in whom the ownership of an automobile has worked the astonishing results. He is my son, Wesley Bones Stitt. Three months ago he was the most promising candidate in Wesley College for the Puffingill Fellowship in Science, carrying one thousand dollars a year. Three months ago he was disrespectfully referred to about the campus as "Dig-Dry-Bones Stitt," and was the object of much jealousy among less ambitious and earnest students. Three months ago he was laboring until the small hours of the morning, after he had prepared his work for the following day in an exceptionally heavy course, on a thesis: "Integral Calculus and the Fourth Dimension." It was, I was told, an amazing, almost a stupefying, piece of original research. Three months ago Wesley was studious, ascetic, concentrated, careless of dress, and lost to all interest in the frivolous and ephemeral things of life. To-night my son is out somewhere in our automobile, entertaining a party of those young ladies to whom I was introduced the other evening; attired, I have no doubt, in the very latest creations of a Fourth Street tailor I might mention but for the universal bar on free advertising matter in literary magazines; driving, I presume, at a rate of speed that would paralyze an officer of the law; and completely and forever through with his college course. He is the inventor of the Stitt Air Pressure Carburetor, and knows several automobile race drivers well enough to purchase drinks for them. You cannot believe it? Do not be surprised—neither can I.

Unfortunately I cannot explain the ingenious and revolutionary principle of the Stitt Air Pressure Carburetor, for three reasons: first, because, as I remarked above, advertising is not permitted in the literary pages of the higher class of magazines, which seems preposterous to me; second, because it would

be a violation of my son's confidence and might put inferior imitators on the track of his invention; and third, because I do not understand it myself. Suffice it to say, then, that he has perfected a certain form of carburetor which will without doubt, to use his words, "revolutionize the automobile industry," and that he has met a man who will promote a company to manufacture and market it. This is important, because it led to my first and only "joy-ride," and to the experiences which, as before mentioned, cause me to blush whenever I think of discovery by President Wither-spoon or my associates on the faculty of Wesley College.

WHEN we purchased our first automobile I was quite ready to permit my daughter, Patricia, to drive it, but before we disposed of it I myself had learned the rudiments of operation, and had become deeply interested in the psychology of exceeding thirty miles an hour. On one occasion I endeavored to impress on an officer, mounted on a tremendously rapid motorcycle, who overhauled and stopped me, the advantage to all science which would accrue from my (projected) treatise on this subject. He was a person of a very low order of intelligence. I quote him literally.

He said: "Can that noise! You come along with me an' pour your little stream of chatter into the judge's ear—I'll bet he'll give you life!"

I refrained from further speech then, but later I explained my purely scientific motive and viewpoint to the jurist who heard my case. He was a frivolous young gentleman, with heavy-lensed eyeglasses.

He said: "All law is scientific, but not all science is lawful. You hit on a bad subject, and it will cost you ten dollars. —Next case."

While I was paying my fine, regretfully, to his clerk, the next case, charged with having been intoxicated, pleaded that he had been trying to cure a cold.

"More science," the young judge said. "Thirty days."

Sometimes I lean toward an apostasy of anarchism, when I see by what stripe

of men the laws of our democracy are made and administered, and this was one of those times.

I say that I became an enthusiastic student of the psychology of automobile operation during the period of our first automobile—what I may call, being myself in a lighter mood than is usual to me, our Harfordian epoch. When we had progressed to the Translandal epoch, or period, of our development, I found myself quite a confirmed motorist. I must confess that my purely scientific habit of mind sloughed from me—I find such eminent authority as Kant himself adverting to this phenomenon in his transcendental, if slightly archaic, "Critique"—and that I grew less and less concerned with psychological phenomena and more and more concerned with the traffic regulations and the various meretricious "speed traps" invented by the diabolically ingenious country police officers of Southern California. These speed traps are on a par with the "purity squads" of the larger cities—both tantalizing the unwary citizen with temptation and then damning him in discovery! On one occasion, I remember, Patricia and myself were bowling along a straight piece of boulevard, well within the idiotic limit of thirty miles prescribed by our mush-minded county supervisors, when a light car passed us as though we had been backing up. Patricia was driving and she expressed her indignation characteristically.

"Can you beat that?" she inquired, sarcastically. "There is a skittish young tub that is going to have the surprise of its verdant adolescence. Grab your lid!"

She meant my hat, you understand, although I caught the import of her colloquialism too late and lost a very handsome beaver headpiece. For Patri-



The policeman was a person of a very low order of intelligence.

cia "stepped out" with a suddenness that found me napping, and our car shot forward instantly with a jerk that sent the speedometer needle into an ecstasy. We found the other car a fast one, but through my daughter's consummate skill, we succeeded, after a pursuit of some miles, in overhauling and passing it. I could not refrain from looking back, with one of the most exasperating smiles I could command, and then I saw that the second man in the car was displaying a badge on his coat lapel and waving to us to stop.

"There is evidently some misunderstanding, Patricia, my dear," I called in her ear. "They desire us to wait for them."

Patricia threw out her clutch and applied the emergency brake; then she too looked back.

"I wouldn't say it was a misunderstanding, Dad," she said, icily. "I should say it was twenty-five dollars. Here—take the wheel. I feel the new fall suit that I was going to order tomorrow slipping from me, and it makes me faint."

So I took the wheel. Patricia got her suit, I may add, but I sacrificed a particularly handsome and complete annotated set of Hume which I had hoped to purchase. This judge was a country judge, and he appeared to conceive a dislike for me the moment I entered his filthy little courtroom. The dislike was mutual.

I DO not wish it to be assumed that I was any less zealous in my pedagogic vocation than before—I was, on the contrary, more efficient, because of my broader view of life. I found myself using snatches and bits from my own experience to strengthen or

point academic asseverations in the classroom. I hope I was a better instructor. I needed to be. I may assure you, because the Stitt Air Pressure Carburetor—

You understand, of course, that the carburetor is to an automobile what the subconscious ego is to automatic ideation. I do not know of a happier analogy. To make it entirely clear, however, I may add that the carburetor is the small, compact mechanical device placed just inside the hood of the car, close to the engine, usually on the right-hand side as you go forward from the driver's seat to light your lamps, provided you have what is called a left-hand drive. Its function is to receive—but, there, I must assume a certain amount of familiarity with the automobile if I am to proceed satisfactorily with my recital. I was about to say that our carburetor never gave us any trouble at all until one evening when we were all going to a lecture at the college. As I recall it, I was the lecturer that evening. However, we did not arrive, so that is of little import.

We were bowling along smoothly enough, my daughter Patricia driving, when Wesley suddenly uttered an exclamation.

"That is it!" he cried. "Stop a minute, Patricia."

He was so vehement that his sister complied. "That is it, is it?" she inquired sarcastically. "You don't know what a load that takes from my mind, Wes. Are you better now?"



"My greatest regret," he said, "is that I couldn't have graduated from Vassar, or one of those places."

My son was under one of those peculiar spells of abstraction I have often noticed in him. He sprang from the car, seized a wrench or similar tool, threw back the hood, and instantly killed the engine.

"Wonderful!"

Patricia exclaimed, bitingly. "You

ought to go into vaudeville. Now press a button and make it say 'Papa!'"

My son glanced up, and in the light from the side lamps I observed his unwonted pallor. "It's all in the gravity feed," he muttered. "Let me see—four times one hundred eight—take the square and reduce to foot-pounds—"

"Take the crank," Patricia interrupted, "and start the engine. What do you think this is—a demonstration? Or do you imagine we're working ourselves up to a tremendous climax in the fourth act of Trigonometry Four?"

"Come, my son," I said; "solve your problem to-morrow. Really we can't wait here, under the circumstances, until such time—"

"Oh, sure we can," Patricia interrupted. "That's right, dear brother—one of the most effective treatments for an engine is to batter the threads on the spark-plugs. It makes the machine stand without hitching, and next to that, twisting the gas feed pipe until it looks like a saxophone— Oh, Wes, you *are* an imbecile!"

The boy scarcely looked up, although at the moment of my daughter's last exclamation he had violently wrenched at some vital organ of the engine and had broken it so that a quantity of heavy oil rushed out and practically completely covered him. "It's the answer," he kept saying. "I'll put the whole problem into quadratics, solve the pressure problem by the new Getz method, and—"

My wife clambered down from the car, with Patricia. To myself she said: "As far as I am concerned I am going home. Had I been given a hand in the upbringing of our son—"

Well, that was all. I tried for an hour to insinuate myself into Wesley's confidence, or to get a response from him, but he only muttered. About nine o'clock, when he had the engine partially dismantled, his face was wreathed suddenly in smiles and he cried, "Air-pressure!" and wrung my hand violently. "Now we'll go on," he announced, cordially.

But he spoke too confidently. When the engine was rehabilitated he had several pieces still lying on the running-boards and the fenders, and half an hour later he threw down the tools, seized my arm, and walked off, whistling. Later I learned that I had witnessed the birth of an idea.

I AM not entirely clear in my mind as to just how Wesley managed so to interest me in his carburetor research, during the next few weeks, that I virtually pauperized myself in aid of his enterprise. I take a certain amount of pride in belonging to the newer school of psychologists who have dared to venture into the field of hypnosis and auto-intoxication, and to correlate, to some extent, the work of psychic experimenters with our own older and better established corps of purely psychological collaborators. Therefore I feel entirely free to set down my half-formed conclusion that in this instance I was influenced by some spiritual or psychic domination which my son gained over me. His mother had tried the use of similar methods for years without success—I gave Wesley, freely, as I thought, and of my own volition, as I then supposed, something more than two thousand dollars of carefully hoarded savings.

Patricia found me out.

We were at breakfast when the dénouement came. It gave me a headache.

Patricia addressed her mother. "Mama, dearest," she began, with a glance at me that seemed to foreshadow the

worst, "have you quite given up the idea of a new detachable-limousine car in the spring?"

My wife gazed at her in surprise. "Certainly not, Patricia. Why do you ask?"

"Have you abandoned the idea of going East next summer to see Grandfather Bones before he dies?"

"I have not, of course."

"Have you considered at all what sort of flat we will get when they foreclose on the house?"

The colloquy made me feel uncomfortable, and I'm afraid I spoke sharply. "Patricia," I said, "you are seemingly impertinent. I don't want to misjudge you, my child, but—"

"Oh, choke those kind words in their cradle, Dad," she interrupted, sarcastically. "If Mother knew what I know, she'd sit down on the floor and scream in three languages. Look at Wesley, there, and then tell me whether you've got conscience enough left to spell *carburetor*."

My heart sank. One glance at my son told me that his sister knew everything. Wesley choked on a spoonful of mush, put his napkin to his mouth, and left the room. A moment later the napkin came flying into the room, like a stormy petrel just ahead of trouble, and I heard the front door bang.

My wife observed me silently, which irritates me exceedingly, as she well knows. I made as though to rise, with some excuse or other relating to my classroom preparation.

"Sit down, Merrithew," Mrs. Stitt said, quietly.

I abominate scenes. So I sat down.

"Now, Patricia," my wife said, "tell me what you mean?"

Patricia is not a crying girl—far from it. But at once she began to sob, and exclaim, and moan, and tap her foot, and rattle her spoon against her coffee cup, and I knew that I was about to be annoyed.

"Wesley told me," she began, brokenly. "It's his carburetor. He's crazy. So's Dad. They've put the razmataz on a new car. And the trip East. And my new suit. And the French lessons. And a rug for the living-room. And

I haven't an undarned pair of stockings to my name. And Betty Gooding has a perfectly gorgeous coat—I could have got one twice as good at Blackwood's for half. And it's all that nasty, vile, miserable, petty, insufferable, damned—"

I saw that I must assert myself. "Patricia!" I cried.

Mrs. Stitt glared at me. "Merrithew," she said, sternly, and moved her chair over so that she could smooth Patricia's hair, the child's head being, by this time, on the table. "Now, dear, calm yourself, and tell me. It's all what?"

"It's all the carburetor."

I rose with dignity. "I understand now," I said, a trifle haughtily. "I have given Wesley some money with which to prosecute his experiments with his new carburetor. That is all there is to it."

Patricia raised her pretty face. "Yes, that's all there is to it," she said, somewhat less chokingly than before. "And that's all there is in it, too—two thousand dollars. A mere passing remark. Lots and lots of men get that much money every year!"

Mrs. Stitt eyed me, as I moved slowly, and with a certain firmness, toward the door. "Is this true, Merrithew?" she asked.

"Yes, madam," I said.

I thought I had escaped, but as the folding doors closed behind me I heard my wife say distinctly: "My engagement ring is upstairs in the writing-table drawer, husband. May I keep the pawn-ticket for you?"

I AM quite clear in my mind, to this moment, that it was on that day that I suffered so severely from a headache.

After my last class that evening Wesley, my son, announced himself. He was pretty sheepish, which I considered no more than fitting.

"Well, my boy," I said, "you see to what your careless tongue has brought your poor old father."

Wesley looked at me with a peculiar, hesitant expression which I have noticed about him of late. "We should worry," he said, and added: "I mean by that that there is no cause for anxiety,

Dad, because I have conceived a hunch that will make us appear like ready money."

"A hunch?" I inquired. "Ready money?"

"The Stitt carburetor, worked out along mathematical lines," he returned, "will permit us to indulge in fizz-water and to kick into the white lights with— with aplomb."

"I wish," I interposed gravely, "that you would refrain from those vulgarisms, Wesley. You have placed me in a position of great discomfort."

"Change your seat, then," he growled. "The trouble with you, Dad, is that you've been so impressed by Patricia's babble that your feet went track. I heard a mechanic say that to-day—it means you aren't true to form, in a manner of speaking. Mother and Pats are frightening you over a few paltry dollars—when all the time I'm hep to a carburetor that will make us rich. *Rich*, spelled with a capital R, and the Z silent as in *penknife*."

I have difficulty in setting down the peculiar argot my son was beginning to use at this time, because it was so foreign to any language he had ever spoken before. The influence of his intercourse with "mechanicians," and other characters more or less nebulous to me, had clouded his usually pure English beyond all reckoning. On this occasion I did not interrupt. I endeavored to glean, from the chaff of his speech, what clear grains of information I could. I said, gravely: "Remember, my boy, that all my savings are now invested in your idea or invention, and that the dear old home wherein you and Patricia were born may, indeed—"

"Nix, Dad," Wesley interposed. "Cheer up, and I'll introduce you to Warren K. Palmer."

"Who is he?" I asked, dully.

"A financier. *The* financier. He says himself that he is the biggest promoter in the promoting business in the community where promoting is a fine art and not a business. That I consider a good line—that is, a laughable epigram."

I smiled with him. "I have heard of him, of course. Do you mean that you know him?"



A recitation, in duet, of "Gunga Din," at four o'clock in the morning, from our front porch.

"Slightly," Wesley said. "I met him on a joy-ride the other night, and I began to ease the Stitt Air Pressure Carburetor into him immediately. Since then I've got him pretty near hooked."

"Hooked?"

"Financial term. It means that he is interested almost to the point of placing some capital at my disposal, or organizing a company, or something of that nature. How is your headache now?"

I assured him that it was rapidly being dispelled.

"That's nice," he said. "Because you'll need to feel like a fighting pup for the mirth party to-morrow night. Warren K. Palmer wants to meet you and you've got to get a hair-cut and come along to help me. You're the baby to put the Indian sign on him."

I frowned at my son. "I cannot tolerate such extreme forms of speech in you at all, Wesley," I said, severely. Really I consider that his last remark was quite offensive, as who would not?

"Excuse me, Dad," he said, humbly. "My foot slipped. What I mean is that you would be of inestimable service if you would attend this little merry-making to-morrow night, to which Mr. Palmer invites you, because I think that, between us, we could get him financially interested in my carburetor."

"But why did he invite a dull old collegian like myself?" I exclaimed.

"It's quite simple. Mr. Palmer said to me: 'I'm one of those self-made men who wouldn't give two hoops on a barrel for education for themselves, but who admire it like a dog-fight in others. My greatest regret,' he said, 'is that I couldn't have graduated from Vassar, or one of those places. But I couldn't; so the next best play is to watch a real learned gentleman go to bat and pinch-hit for me.'"

"Pinch-hit," I repeated, vacantly.

"Yes—another financial term. Mr. Palmer knows who you are; he says he tried once to read your 'Psychology of Creed Superstitions,' and got as far as the index to the third chapter. 'Your respected paternal ancestor stopped me, Stitt,' he added; 'and the man that stops me I want to know.'"

"Mr. Palmer has no wife—divorce, I believe; and he has to drop in at clubs and cafés and theaters for his—his tired feeling, you see. Perfectly innocent, of course. He's really a good sort. I met him when I was with a gang of the speed demons of these parts, and he bought a bottle. I mean by that that he paid for the luncheon, or whatever it was, you understand. Now he wants you to join us, and if you do, we won't abandon him until he is president of the Stitt Air Pressure Carburetor Company, if it takes all night and part of the next afternoon. And, Dad!"

"Yes, my son."

"For the love of Mike, get your whiskers trimmed."

IT so happened that I *did* need to go to a barber, having put off the matter for several days—I acceded to Wesley's request, and told the man to trim my beard. I was rather astonished at the result, and at first I was chagrined, but the change pleased me more afterwards.

Wesley called for me in the afternoon, and as it was Saturday I was freshly attired in my least shiny black suit and was waiting. We went directly to the office of Mr. Palmer and were ushered into his room by a smartly dressed lad of tender years, who appeared to be wearing a suit considerably too small for him, but who contrived to open the doors for us without protruding from his clothing as I anticipated he might.

Mr. Palmer was a ruddy faced gentleman of middle age. He was cordiality itself. He put on his coat at once, and took his hat and walking stick from another tightly-buttoned-up boy, and we went down to his car. Never before that had I appreciated Mrs. Stitt's penchant for limousine bodies.

Mr. Palmer asked me many questions, but I am not sure what I answered. I do remember that some remark led me to make a few statements outlining the difference between the Munsterberg and the Angell schools of practical psychological experimentation, approaching the subject from the angle of criminology, and the sex element in criminals, which seemed to interest Mr. Palmer exceedingly.

I know the ride to the hotel in the suburbs of Los Angeles where we dined was brief. And throughout the meal Mr. Palmer, warming rapidly as we ate and drank and talked, to the several fields I touched upon, grew more and more friendly. He asked if I would object to his calling me "Merry," in lieu of Merrithew, and as I was feeling at that moment, a pleasant glow of camaraderie stealing over me, I believe I assented, on the one condition that he would permit me to speak of him as Warren. He called my son "Hot Air," which Wesley explained came from Palmer's facetious manner of referring



"I would like to ask you, so that I may return it to its owner, what lady gave you a small gilt slipper last night."

to what he termed the Hot Air Pressure Carburetor. Taken all in all, we were quite a jovial party.

You may be able to understand that much of the evening's entertainment, as I look back upon it, was a confused recollection to me on the following day, not because of any intemperance on my part, either in intellectual excitement, eating or drinking, but because the experience was one so foreign to anything in which I usually and wontedly indulged. This psychological upheaval of the normal faculties of observation, ideation and memory is one entirely familiar to us men of science, and among ourselves would cause no surprise or comment. My wife, not being a psychologist, later expressed some amazement, almost indignant in nature, at my inability to account for the hours that passed, but I succeeded in stopping her, as I shall explain presently.

The facts are that some time during that pleasant evening several other persons joined our party, although whether it was when we were in the café, or later, when we left in the several machines in which we had come, or still later when we assembled, a merry crew of fully a dozen, in the large dining-room of a

quiet country inn, I do not consider it important to endeavor to remember. For nothing at all reprehensible occurred, to my knowledge, unless the pretty coquetry of the graceful and charming young ladies, or those friendly pats on the head or hand which characterize every gathering of kindred spirits, or the incident of one young person, of the female sex, seizing bodily on me and insisting, in her innocent and delightful manner, that I must immediately learn a dance she termed the "crippled duck"—unless these things may be characterized as reprehensible.

I recall distinctly, during the evening, that it was one of the pleasantest and most care-free I had ever spent. On the following day I confess I had less of this feeling, and the excellent dinner our host, Mr. Palmer, had provided caused me to feel what I might almost call an aversion for food thereafter for two or three days, but these incidents, together with the chance coincidence that, at the time, I was a trifle under the weather from overwork in my classrooms, certainly were not sufficient to justify Mrs. Stitt, excellent lady though she is, to cast on me the eye of suspicion.

It is incomprehensible, as I view it, speaking as a man of science, that those who are happily married, and devoted to one another in all things, should be unable coldly to dissect psychological manifestations and to trace them to natural and scientific premises, instead of jumping to conclusions wholly unfounded in fact, and quite absurd, considered as logical phenomena of the race mind.

I have said above, however, that I estopped Mrs. Stitt, when she and Patricia, on the Sunday afternoon following, came to my room, where I was still abed with a trifling indisposition due to a change in the weather, or what-not, and urged on me insinuating questions.

"We only came up to see whether you wanted an undertaker or the gold cure," Patricia began, but her mother interposed.

"Overlooking your unheard-of debauch of last night," she said, in icy tones of reproof, "and the fact that

you and Wesley are not elocutionists trained to charm the neighborhood with a recitation, in duet, of 'Gunga Din,' at four o'clock in the morning, from our front porch, I would like to ask you, so that I may return it to its owner, what lady gave you a small gilt slipper last night, and how you came into possession of a dress coat made in New York City, and lined with Skinner's satin?"

The question was too involved to convey much meaning to me at that time. I fixed my wife with my eye. "Mrs. Stitt," I observed, with dignity, "I went out last night to conclude business negotiations for the formation of a large corporation to manufacture and market the remarkable mechanical device which our son has just completed for automobiles. Those negotiations, I am happy to tell you, have been carried—"

Patricia sniffed. "What is this, Dad, an arrangement from the first opus of Noah Webster, or an excuse? Take your words apart and drop all those that don't mean anything. How do you spell what you're trying to say?"

I replied: "Patricia, I do not understand you."

"Oh, well, you wouldn't. —Do you spell this oration to the Romans M-O-N-E-Y?"

I caught her meaning at once, and smiled. "Yes," I said. "Be good enough to pass my dress trousers to me."

Patricia jumped for them, and I saw that she was holding her breath and that even my wife was under the spell of the dramatic moment. I drew out some papers. "There is a memorandum of agreement, I believe it is called, from Mr. Warren K. Palmer, whose name you may know, for the organization of a large corporation to take over the patent rights of the Stitt Air Pressure Carburetor. And here is a check for five thousand dollars, payable to me, for the advances I have made to Wesley during his experimentation."

I lay back on my pillow and smiled benignly upon them. Patricia closely examined the check. "It seems all right, Mater. Let's go down and dig out that Piat catalogue. There's no class to detachable limousine bodies anyway—no class a-tall!"



Tearing the insulting document to an infinity of tiny pieces, she sowed them to the winds.

—*"An Evening of 'Tosca'."*

THE second of the stories Edith Macvane has written for you of the adventures of an American singer in Italy.

An Evening of "Tosca"

By Edith Macvane

Author of "The Great Marchetti," etc.

IN the life even of a rising young prima donna, bad days sometimes occur. Nora Verney, being no exception to this rule, climbed to the lofty park of Arezzo in a very low frame of mind.

The rehearsal of "La Tosca" that morning had gone badly; there was no denying that fact. Instead of the lavish praise to which she was accustomed from the musical director, that temperamental individual had openly voiced his disgust.

"Blood of a dog! Is this woman then a singing actress, or is she an icebox? The golden voice is there, I grant you. But *per Bacco!* The passion of *Floria Tosca*, where is it? the jealousy, the murderous rage, the deadly despair? Behold!" And his mincing imitation of her ladylike violence produced a laugh from everyone but the unfortunate soprano herself. "But then, my poor Miss Verney, you are an American—so what can one expect?" was his mournful conclusion as the prima donna, with burning cheeks, turned to leave the theater.

Under other circumstances Pina del Torre—as Nora Verney was known to the public—might have become indignant. In the present case, however, she knew his criticism was just.

In the summer, against her own judgment and yielding only to the persuasions of her agent, she had accepted a contract to sing "La Tosca" in the great autumn season of the Dal Verone Theater of Milan. And the Dal Verone is, of course, as everyone knows, the next step to La Scala and world-wide

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GEORGE BAKER

fame. Nora's only doubt was that in her case this magnificent opportunity had come in a rôle which she felt ill-suited to her gifts and her limitations. In the delicate sentiment, the poetic tragedy of "Manon Lescaut," of "Bohème" and "La Traviata," she had already won her laurels. But from the incomparably heavier part of *La Tosca*, which runs the gamut of every violent and lurid emotion, she shrank with a feeling of youthful inadequacy. For two solid months she worked in Milan, training for the part with a celebrated ex-prima donna, but without results satisfactory either to her teacher or to herself. So when a chance came in September to "try it on the dog" in the little Tuscan city of Arezzo, before appearing before the great public of Milan later on, Pina accepted the opportunity with joy.

"And if you can please the public of Arezzo, you can be sure of making a success in Milan," was her agent's reassuring comment. "Tremendous fellows they are, these Aretines! They have already protested two sopranos, and sent them back to Milan—you, going there, make the third. Besides which, it appears they are now protesting the tenor! However—*coraggio, signorina!* To a prima donna of your standing, even the Aretines can accord only respect!"

In spite of recent triumphs achieved in Leghorn and in Bologna, Nora Verney was too well acquainted with the high standard of connoisseurship in the Italian provinces to feel any lofty certainty of success in going before the little Aretine public as *Tosca*. And the

comments of the *maestro*, in voicing audibly her own inward doubts of herself, had carried her self-confidence to zero. With her eyes fixed on the beautiful plain of Tuscany below her, where the golden haze of autumn lay over ripened vines and laden fruit-trees, her heart was constricted in that painful spasm of self-doubt which only the artist can know.

BESIDES these inward pangs of the soul, the outer situation was also full of difficulties. Nora, arriving in Arezzo to take the place of the soprano who had been protested and sent back to Milan, found that she had arrived in a bee's-nest of buzzing hates and grudges. The *maestro*, whose nerves had been racked by these continual difficulties with the public, was nervous and hard to please. The other artists were gloomy and pessimistic as to *Tosca's* chance of success.

Worst of all, however, was the revengeful attitude taken up by the deposed prima donna—who after her departure from town proceeded to keep things hot, both in Arezzo and Milan, by means of thinly veiled anonymous letters. Against her detested successor these unsigned letters brought the most vulgar and mortifying accusations. And poor Pina found to her bewilderment that if enough mud is flung, some of it is sure to stick.

The Aretine public meanwhile resolutely kept up its reputation as the most critical and the most pig-headed in Italy, by continuing its determined protest against the tenor, de Veroli. The impresario, already half ruined by the expense of continually importing fresh artists, declared that the tenor was excellent and that he should remain. As in every Italian city the opera is among the municipal institutions, endowed from the city funds and founded in the hearts of the people, the difficulty took on the importance of an election, and feeling ran high.

"As though I didn't have enough against me, coming out in a part that I can't do decently, without having to sing opposite a tenor that the public are preparing to hiss from the stage!" mourned

Nora to herself. And with a sigh she began to open the letters that had been handed her when she left the theater.

One of them, written on cheap pink stationery and bearing the postmark of Milan, brought the blood to her cheek and the tears of rage to her eyes. The writer, whose name though unsigned was easily guessed, brought against the young American prima donna the crude and vulgar charge of a flagrant love-affair with the tenor de Veroli—whose forsaken wife was represented meanwhile as pining away with grief in Milan. As de Veroli, a handsome and conceited youth, had already tried to obtrude his unwanted attentions on the new prima donna, this coarse annoying accusation stirred Nora's wrath to a redoubled pitch. Tearing the insulting document to an infinity of tiny pieces, she sowed them to the winds. Had it not been for her absolute necessity of having these trial performances of *La Tosca*, she would have immediately turned her back on the whole annoying muddle and returned to Milan by the evening train.

Things being as they were, however, she opened the "*Tosca*" score with a sigh, and set herself to an hour's vigorous study of the lurid melodrama she felt herself so ill-qualified to interpret.

AS Nora stepped in at the stage door of the opera-house, a woman advanced to meet her. A first glance showed the robust figure, the white-ostrich-feather boa, the dark, flashing Milanese style of beauty. The second glance informed the hurrying Nora that the newcomer was in a high state of emotional agitation.

"I speak," she asked explosively, "with the Signorina Verney?" Nora, surprised, nodded in assent. The speaker continued:

"I, signorina, am the Signora de Veroli, wife of the tenor de Veroli!"

The announcement was made with the air of one who flings a bomb. Nora, rather puzzled, nodded with impatient politeness.

"I am glad to make your acquaintance, signora. No doubt, you will find your husband here at the rehearsal. And now, as I also must be on time—"

"My husband! How dare you mention his name! No, signorina, I settle accounts with *him* a bit later!" The speaker's nostril quivered; her gloved fist clenched with a ferocity which boded ill for the unfortunate tenor. Her jaw snapped. "And now, signorina, look!" And with trembling hands she fumbled in her silver mesh bag. The next instant she flapped an open letter before the young American's eyes. With a recoil of disgust, Nora recognized the cheap pink stationery and sprawling handwriting of the vile anonymous letters which already had caused her so much annoyance. The next moment her face burned with indignation and with shame. For her quick eye, sweeping the page, saw repeated upon it the same insulting falsehoods regarding herself and de Veroli.

Her voice trembled with rage as in quick, incisive phrase she began to explain to the shaken woman before her the story of the anonymous letters and of the deposed prima donna's revenge. Suddenly Nora's speech was cut short; her hand was seized, and the handsome swollen visage was thrust up into hers.

"Signorina, for the love of Heaven, do not irritate me with these useless denials, or it will go hard with you and with your lover! As you see, I am still able to control myself. So I will merely state that I have come down from Milan in order to forbid de Veroli and you from singing together on Thursday night!"

Nora nodded coldly. "Perhaps that will be best. The impresario can telegraph to Milan at once for another tenor. And in any case, as your husband has already been protested by the public of Arezzo—"

The tenor's wife carried her hand to her throat with a gesture as of suffocation. With a vehement stillness more darkly menacing than her violence, she replied:

"I will thank you not to mock yourself of me, signorina! For me to revenge myself on my husband is one thing. To stop his earnings on the stage is another! *Dio mio!* Have I not suffered enough, without starving to death? No, signorina. De Veroli can sing, and

he shall sing. But you, you who have stolen the vile traitor from me, you shall not sing! To see you sing *Tosca* to his *Cavaradossi*—to behold you in each other's arms, to hear you sing together that music of love, to see you, heartless traitors that you are! caressing each other with an insolent passion which is not even feigned for the stage—*per Bacco! No!*" The last word was almost a shout. She gulped and proceeded: "So I have made up my mind. I have decided that you, signorina, are to go to the impresario and say that you have caught a bad sore throat, and will therefore be unable to sing *Tosca* on Thursday night. If they wire at once to Milan for a new soprano, she will be on time—"

"And if I refuse?" returned Nora, half amused and half indignant at the program thus high-handedly laid out for her.

In an instant the volcanic calm of the handsome face before her was disturbed by a smoldering flash. The reply was spat out:

"Signorina, do not irritate me! For your own sake, for the sake of your lover, you had both better do as I say! For by the Madonna of Mezzo Agosto, I swear that if on Thursday night you are still in Arezzo—if you and that villain dare to sing on the same stage together, then I shall know how to revenge myself on the two of you! I will pay you both out, never fear!"

Nora Verney, shaking her off, went on into the opera-house.

The rehearsal, which went even worse than that of the morning, failed to bring her the happy forgetfulness which she was accustomed to find in her art. Had it been possible to do so with honor and dignity, she would willingly have resigned forever the lurid rôle of *La Tosca* and returned that very night to Milan.

ON Thursday night the opera-house was packed.

By raising the curtain promptly at nine o'clock, instead of fifteen or twenty minutes later as is usual in Italian provinces, the management was able to avert—or at least postpone—the danger of

an explosion. For as the tenor's aria, as well as his duet with the soprano, comes in the first part of the first act, they were thus already sung before the audience were fairly in their seats.

The management therefore breathed more freely for the moment. So did the handsome de Veroli, who, though conscious of his own lack of technical finish, trusted to his powerful lungs and dashing style of acting to win public support for his *Cavaradossi*. And his love-making to the beautiful *Floria Tosca*—in the person of the young American prima donna of whom Arezzo had heard such excellent accounts—was calculated to sweep the public from their seats with its tempestuous ardor. They heard him, however, in grim silence. Odd to say, their coldness was exceeded by that of the prima donna. The golden voice, certainly, she possessed. But far from demonstrating the remarkable dramatic gifts that had been heralded as hers, this *Tosca* was frigid, graceful and unresponsive as a plastic image. But far from seeking the cause of the prima donna's coldness in the person of the handsome black-haired woman in the white-ostrich-feather boa, seated in the right-hand stage-box, the audience merely shrugged and observed, "*Americana*."

Nora Verney, to tell the truth, was in an awkward position. In the first night of appearing in a new part, it is in any case hard to sing opposite a tenor whom the public has resolutely determined to condemn. The difficulty of creating a romantic illusion is, however, much increased if the tenor's jealous wife, seated practically on the stage, persistently divines the feigned identities of the actors by her fierce, grim, following stare.

The handsome tenor, feeling himself in the enviable position of a cock between two hens, forgot the looming menace of the hostile public and expanded with gratified vanity. Under the very eyes of his jealous wife, de Veroli jauntily took advantage of his love-scenes with *Tosca* by pressing the young soprano's hand, by bestowing little private caresses and frequently whispering in her ear: "I adore you!"

THE situation, for Nora Verney, was a maddening one. In spite of her pretty looks, rendered piquant and vivid by *Tosca's* immense feathered hat of tradition, in spite of the ringing sweetness of her voice and the labored intensity of her acting, she felt the scene slipping from her. That bond of living sympathy between the artist and the public, which in her own brief but successful experience had always been as warm and unfailing as the answering hand-clasp of a beloved friend, was in this case totally absent.... Perhaps, however, after the tiresome tenor should have left the stage, then she might hope that her scene with the baritone, the villainous *Scarpia*, might go better!

Suddenly the whole blood of her body went recoiling to her heart. Her fears, which had before been only for her own presentation of *Tosca*, suddenly transferred themselves to her own existence as Nora Verney. For the hand of the jealous woman in the stage-box, relaxing after her husband's exit from the stage, drooped carelessly over the red velvet cushion before her. A little black instrument in her hand, thus displayed more clearly, seemed to reveal itself to Nora's startled glance not as an opera glass, but as a revolver.

The rest of the act was sung as though in a dream. To the faint hand-clapping which greeted the fall of the curtain Nora could not even give attention. As soon as her costume was changed for the next act, she fled to seek the impresario and to demand that the Signora de Veroli be either disarmed or ejected.

That unfortunate man, already desperate with the strain of presenting his protested tenor, flung up his hands in peevish despair. His gesture declared that she was adding the straw which broke the camel's back. Five minutes later, when he returned from his interview with the lady in the stage box, his attitude toward his prima donna was that of soothing a vexatious child.

"Signorina, your imagination runs away with you! The signora swears she has no such weapon in her possession! Her opera glass, her silver bag, her silver-handled umbrella—beyond a



"I, signorins, am the Signora de Veroli, wife of the tenor de Veroli!" The announcement was made with the air of one who flings a bomb. Nora, rather puzzled, nodded with impatient politeness.

doubt, it is one of these objects that you mistook, in your excitement—"

"I didn't! And what's more, I won't go on again till you've had her searched and disarmed!"

"Signorina, I beg you to remember a fact: Without a governmental permit—which is never issued to a woman—the carrying of arms is contrary to Italian law. If then the signora is able to disprove the grave charge you are bringing against her, she can bring against you a suit for heavy damages because you have accused her falsely of a criminal offense. So think twice, signorina! You are ready to take your oath—your sacred oath before a tribunal—that it was a revolver you saw in the signora's hand?"

The idea of the damage suit gave Nora pause. "Not my oath, perhaps, but I'm certain—"

"You see! *Signorina cara*, listen to me! In the situation where we stand, we must all be reasonable. It is for your interest, as well as for that of the rest of us, that this evening's performance of 'Tosca' be a success—is it not so?"

Nora, shivering at the idea of failure, returned a vigorous "Yes!"

"*Ebbene!* the public, as you know, has come to-night in a very delicate condition of rage and of indignation. Perhaps it was a mistake to present de Veroli again—however, for some reason they seem to be accepting him. Whether it is out of courtesy for you, or because he really succeeds in pleasing them in this new part, or because they are merely biding their time, it is as yet impossible to say. In any case, we know that their present calm is not real calm, but merely a suppressed agitation. A wrong note, a misplaced gesture, and the storm may break out.

"Imagine then the effect if we attempt to use force toward this woman, to search her or to remove her from the box! She declares frankly that her resistance will be violent. Let her scream once—from a long experience of the public, signorina, I declare to you that one scream would suffice to snap the public's calm and to rouse the storm which now, thanks to the Madonna! is slumbering."

WITH the true Italian gift for eloquence, the impresario succeeded in convincing Nora against her own reason. And her suddenly aroused fear was therefore pushed into the back of her mind as she dashed on the stage for the second act. Her one thought was a straining after her elaborate lessons in Milan, and a devout though desperate hope that she could accomplish the terrible scenes of torture and of murder with some degree of effect. Once out before the footlights, however, the unhappy girl repented her easily provoked confidence. From her mere uneasy qualms concerning the success of her own acting, she found herself suddenly shuttlecocked back to her uglier and more primitive fear. The woman in the stage-box, whose jealous fury had evidently been whipped to its climax by the attempted interference of the manager, had risen to her feet. The white-ostrich-feather boa, held sideways, concealed her right hand from the audience. To the unfortunate prima donna, however, the object that it held was fully revealed. This time there could be no doubt as to the actual reality of the woman's revolver, nor of the fact that it was pointed straight at Nora Verney.

The condition of this latter was like that of a hypnotized person or of a sleep-walker, if this abnormal mental condition could be supposed as co-existent with normal mental activity. A strange double consciousness possessed and exalted her. From very force of habit and of circumstance, she continued to exist as *La Tosca*, to play and to sing the supremely difficult part she assumed. At the same time, with a vivid sense of her own personal life and the dear sweetness of it, she measured the distance from herself to the stage box, calculated the caliber of the revolver, the probable accuracy of the woman's aim and the moment she was likely to choose for firing. In the very moment of singing a sustained high C, the answer to this latter question flashed upon Nora's mind. In about five minutes after *Cavaradossi's* entrance from the torture-chamber, it would be necessary for *La Tosca* to meet him with an embrace, to

sustain him in her arms, to lavish upon him the consolation of impassioned kisses and caresses.

A shudder ran through her. Through the back of her mind flew the jealous wife's words of the other day—words which Nora had taken too lightly: "To see you in each other's arms, to behold you caress each other with an insolent passion which is not even feigned for the stage—no, I cannot bear it!"

IT was the moment when the tenor, as *Cavaradossi*, had disappeared into the inner chamber to be bound upon the rack. *Tosca's* agony for her lover's sufferings, as interpreted by the voice of Nora Verney, was actually compounded of anguished fear for her own skin and of rage that she should have been placed in a position of such blighting peril for the sake of a vain, underbred and thoroughly commonplace young man like the *de Veroli*.

Nora's swift thought flashed to the possibility of a warning word to the prompter, or a whisper out behind the scenes. But from indubitable signs of irritation on that part of the audience, it was plain that their patience with the company presenting the protested tenor was fast coming to an end. From the torture-chamber, the tenor shouted out his challenge to the villainous *Scarpia*: "I defy you!" A low growl ran over the darkened theater. Here and there hisses were heard. A sardonic voice dropped like a stone from the gallery: "So you defy us, do you? Ugly monkey, we defy you!"

A shiver ran through the unfortunate prima donna. In her own presentation of the part she was singing, Nora knew that her personal success with the Arezzo public was distressingly open to doubt. Had she felt surer of her own ability to carry the performance to success, she might have relaxed her anger toward the tenor long enough to whisper him a word of warning. She doubted, however, his ability to keep his nerve as she herself was doing. In his fear for his own safety, he might wreck the whole chance of success.

No, a word or a glance amiss, a moment's relaxation in their fierce strain-

ing after vocal and dramatic effect, and the storm might break. In that moment of supreme choice, Nora discovered for herself the tremendous force of that fire which in the artist's soul burns more strongly than the vital spark itself. Of the two perils between which she stood, it was not death she dreaded so much as failure. The revolver-shot might miss striking a vital part. But the hiss of her audience would penetrate her very heart.

She pulled herself together. The torture-scene was coming to an end—a torture in her case not only simulated but real. The tenor, staggering and with blood on his forehead, appeared in the door of the torture-chamber. The fatal moment had come. Would the first bullet be for her—or for the faithless *de Veroli*?

THE soprano, urged by a winged instinct which surpassed even the necessity of self-preservation, flew to meet him, clasped him in her white arms, covered him with caresses, sang her words of passionate tenderness in his ear. In a little pulsation of horror, she realized that the sofa to which she must support him stood on the right side of the stage, directly under the box from which the revolver was aimed at her body.

Nevertheless she did not falter. Her exaltation was such that she did not even hear the low storm of hisses, of cat-calls and of muttered threats that had begun to break from the other side of the footlights. With the racked *Cavaradossi* staggering, clinging to her arms, *Tosca* walked steadily down stage to the sofa, R.

In the box above, the figure of its occupant was sharply silhouetted as she leaned forward with upraised arm. Her lips were parted in a little greedy smile; her black eyes shone wild. The glare of the footlights was reflected from her teeth and from the bright metal trimmings of her little black revolver. With a blind recklessness of consequences, Nora aided the tenor to the sofa; cast herself on her knees beside him, with her back presented as a helpless target to the enemy; and flinging her two arms about him, she caressed him

with the impassioned fondness demanded by the Libretto.

In the brief impassioned duet between the two, Nora heard her own voice tremble uncertainly. As for the tenor, each phrase that he sang was saluted with a rising storm of hisses. Evidently the angry Aretines, having tolerated the protested tenor just so far, had now reached the limits of their patience.

"Vittoria! Vittoria!"

The exultant words of *Cavaradossi* were unfortunately sung by de Veroli with a regrettable exaggeration of defiance and of insolent triumph. The furious voice of the public answered him. Over the head of Nora, face to face with sudden death, the storm passed high like a roaring wind....

Ah! What was that spurt of red?

In blind horror Nora struggled to her feet. On the left breast of the tenor's white linen shirt she beheld a spreading splotch of bright scarlet, while her own hand and arm, with which she had embraced him, were dyed with the same awful tint.

Helplessly she tried to wipe away that viscid red fluid from her hand. Suddenly she touched a slimy yellow seed. At the same instant, stooping with terrified compassion toward the tenor, she perceived that the alarming stain on his shoulder was not blood, but the crushed remains of a large, dead-ripe tomato.

Other vegetables, deftly aimed so as to avoid the shrinking figure of the prima donna, went flying past her head. Her ears were deafened with the storm of hoots, the cat-calls, the crash of brass and roll of drums with which the musical director was desperately trying to subdue the din.

"Basta! enough!" "Away with de Veroli! *Via! via!*" "Ugly monkey, do you cry *victory*? We'll teach you a lesson!" "Away with you! Out of our theater! Out of Arezzo!"

Nora Verney, on whose lips still lingered the taste of mortal peril, found time even in that rushing moment to admire the demeanor of the tenor. A vulgar lady-killer, an unfaithful husband, he might be; but certainly he was no coward. Rising from his simulated swoon upon the sofa, he faced the storm

of hisses, the flying rain of undignified missiles with which the pit and the gallery were expressing their contempt of him. And in a loud, strong voice he continued to sing the defiant lines of *Cavaradossi*.

NORA, in a sudden collapse of the unnatural courage which so far had sustained her, dashed to the side of the stage. Panting, half fainting, she paused to sing *Tosca's* response to *Cavaradossi*, and to glance back at her enemy.

There in the stage-box she sat, unchanged except that the pistol had disappeared. The glittering red-rimmed black eyes were fixed on the solitary figure of de Veroli alone in the middle of the stage.

In spite of the singer's resistance, the end was plainly approaching. With furious gestures of both arms at once, the musical director sought to hold together his scattering orchestra in a desperate crash of bass viol and drum. But the enfeebled music was drowned in the roar of what had now become a mob. The explanation of this new and terrifying note was flashed to Nora in a half-gasped conversation between the bari-tone and a member of the orchestra who had taken refuge behind her in the wings.

"Has he locked the doors?"

"He swears he will hold the public in the theater till the performance is finished, whether they will or not. Yes, *per Bacco!* he has locked the doors!"

In a flash Nora understood the impudent conduct of the impresario, who, after attempting to force upon the public a singer they had rejected, had now committed the supreme folly of trying to hold them in the theater against their own will. She had no time, however, to deplore her own ill luck, which had placed her debut in so important a part between the hands of so ill-judging a manager. The noises from the body of the theater were growing more and more alarming.

Debarred from expressing their opinion of de Veroli by leaving the theater in a body, the public remained to express it personally. The vigor with which they

did so remains historic even in the lively annals of the Italian lyric theater. All the time the object of their fury, with a courage that might be fatuous or might be sublime, continued to stand with folded arms, outfacing them.

If his jealous wife had desired her revenge, here it was more completely than she herself could have wreaked it—in her faithless husband's public humiliation, in the utter and complete blasting of his future career. Her wild black eyes as she leaned over the rim of her box were fixed in the same ferocious sparkle.

THE next instant she recoiled. Above the angry growl of the fermenting mob was projected a new sound, more sharply material and more terrifying. She strained her ears. Yes—the grinding shock of rent wood—of ripped-up iron.

"Was he crazy, to lock them in?" she heard the baritone's voice demanding. "Listen! the galleryites are tearing up their benches!"

The next instant, turning around and around in somersaults through the darkened vault of the opera-house, a long, cumbersome object came sailing down from the upper regions of the gallery. Then a reverberating impact like the explosion of a cannon—and a black wooden bench, wrecked and tottering, became visible on the damaged platform of the stage.

Another bench—then a little red-velvet chair from one of the boxes, an umbrella, a shower of wooden footstools. By lively footwork, the pale-faced and defiant tenor managed to dodge these missiles.

Nora's heart contracted in a spasm of sudden fear. "If he should be hit and killed, I suppose *she'd* be satisfied!" was her quick thought as she glanced back at the stage-box.

But the gloating black eyes alight with satisfied revenge had disappeared. Instead, Nora beheld a stout pair of black legs, elegantly clad in thin silk tissue and varnished leather.

Even in that moment of furious disturbance, Nora's heart contracted anew. Yes, there could be no doubt about it—

with the desperate agility of a cat, her enemy was climbing out of the box upon the stage!

"Isn't she satisfied? Isn't she satisfied now?" cried Nora to herself, and wrung her hands. This half-crazed, passionate woman, armed with a deadly weapon, balked of her revenge by accident—to what new act of desperate folly was she moving now?

The next moment, by a furious exertion of her plump limbs, the intruder had landed upon the stage. A new roar, half of indignant protest and half of sardonic amusement, rose up from the howling public. The tenor, who undaunted had faced the violence of a furious mob, shrank back before his wife with dropped jaw and dangling hands. For a moment he seemed about to flee. His wife leaped toward him like a tigress. Nora, remembering that the woman was armed, screamed and closed her eyes.

A sudden hush, breaking the roar with the same startling effect as an explosion breaks the silence, brought her lids flying open. There on the stage before her she beheld the Signora de Veroli, one arm extended in furious protest toward the amazed public.

"If you kill him, then kill me too!" she shouted in anguished accent. "How dare you protest him? How dare you say he can't sing? He's my husband, and he has the finest voice in all Italy!"

A MURMUR, which was hardly more than an amused gasp of amazement, ran around the house. The woman on the stage stamped her foot, and the tears burst from her eyes. Her face had flushed a bright crimson. With the footlights flashing on her wet, black eyes and her white teeth, she appeared not the rather coarse Milanese beauty of every day, but the warlike figure of some splendid Amazon.

"Cowards! Sons of dogs! Sit down in your places again! And unless you want Arezzo to be eternally disgraced as the home of ill-mannered boors who cannot even tell good music when they hear it, then let my husband sing again! *Canaglia!* Sons of priests! Take shame to yourselves and call back the *maestro!*



There on the stage before her she beheld the Signora de Veroli, one arm extended in furious protest



toward the amazed public. "If you kill him, then kill me too!" she shouted in anguished accent.

Have the stage swept and let the performance go on!"

A handsome woman, predominant everywhere, wields a paramount influence in Italy, the traditional home of gallantry. The very audacity of her demand and of her abuse of them, instead of irritating the angry public, swept it over to her side.

A chair-cushion, arriving on the stage near to the signora's foot, evoked the sudden protest of violent hisses. With a gesture of unconscious pathos, she turned to the public as though evoking its protection against the unknown thrower of the chair-cushion. It was that little appealing gesture, perhaps, that turned the scale. Somewhere in the gallery, a pair of hands began to clap. The next instant, with that volatile susceptibility to suggestion which is characteristic of all mobs, the crowd had broken into warm applause. Then with the ready dry humor of the Tuscan, who enjoys a joke even upon himself,—moved also by sympathy for the loyal and courageous woman before them,—they began to cry:

"De Veroli! De Veroli! *Maestro!* Let us go ahead! *Andiamo!*—let us finish the evening! De Veroli!"

Five minutes later the stage, swept and set in order, was hastily equipped with new furniture from the rather shabby stock belonging to the opera-house. The footstools, benches and cushions were carried back to the auditorium. The members of the orchestra had been induced to return to their places. The *maestro* raised his baton. A moment later the curtain rolled up anew to disclose *Tosca*, *Scarpia* and *Cavaradossi*—in a clean shirt—all occupying the identical positions that had been theirs at the breaking-out of the riot.

The scene proceeded, carrying singers and public along with it. Nora, breathing deep, felt her blood resume its usual flow, heard her voice take on again its normal power and sweetness. With all her force she braced herself to meet the immense double demand which the opera singer, alone of all artists, must meet: as a living harp not only of

melody but of passion, at once the singer and the tragedian. Then as *Cavaradossi* was carried off by the *sbirri*, leaving beautiful *Tosca* alone with the villainous tempter *Scarpia*, Nora felt her brain and larynx clear, her spirit soar. Little by little, as the terrible scene proceeded through its fearful phases of cruelty and to its final climax of blood, Nora became increasingly conscious that a miracle had been accomplished.

For a moment after the fall of the curtain, the house paid Nora the supreme compliment of silence. Then came an outburst of crashing applause.

ON the wave of the prima donna's success, even the protested de Veroli managed to ride into the haven of public approval. At the conclusion of the performance, the admiration of the volatile Aretines was expressed with the same roaring unanimity as that with which, a short time before, they had driven the singers from the stage. And the twenty-odd thunderous curtain calls to the triumphant *Tosca* were given and accepted as blandly as though on that same stage the applauders and the applauded had not been ranged against each other like wild beasts and their prey.

Not less completely vanished was the fugitive splendor of tragedy from the handsome, vulgar countenance of the Signora de Veroli—who, smirking in visible satisfaction, sat queening it in her stage-box. A short time later, as hugging up the arm of her husband she sailed gloriously toward the stage-door, an unexampled thing occurred: the prima donna herself, issuing from her dressing-room, took a few steps toward the pair. But the tenor's wife, instead of humbly accepting the honor, averted her head and with undisguised rudeness began to drag her husband away.

But Nora remained rooted to the spot. Her cheeks blazed with ecstatic triumph; her eyes shone like stars. Then flinging out both hands to her enemy's retreating back: "I owe it all to you," she breathed. "Thank you!"

The Ghatghee

AN exploit of Philo Gubb,
the eminent Correspondence
School Deteckative.

By Ellis Parker Butler

The Foremost Humorist in America

ILLUSTRATED BY REA IRVIN



PHILO GUBB turned away from his telephone, stepped over two bundles of wall-paper and thus reached his desk, from the drawer of which he took his checkbook. A rapid calculation assured him that he had one hundred and sixteen dollars to his credit, and he tore out a blank check, slipped it into his pocket, placed his hat on his head and hurried down to the street.

The message that had thus drawn Mr. Gubb from his office-bedroom-shop was from Mr. Tidwell, owner of the Riverbank Exchange.

"Is that you, Gubb?" Mr. Tidwell had 'phoned. "Come right down here, will you, to the Exchange?"

"I'll come right away immediately at once," said Mr. Gubb. And he went.

The graduate of the Rising Sun Detective Bureau's Correspondence School of Detecting (in twelve lessons) did not, to tell the truth, expect that he was desired in either of his dual capacities of paper-hanger or detective. Many worthy people of Riverbank, unacquainted with the more intimate details of Philo Gubb's life, were puzzled by his continued activities as a paper-hanger and decorator, thinking that the many rewards he had won must have made him wealthy, but they did not know that the simple-minded Mr. Gubb had a deep and unwavering belief in Mr. Tidwell and the

Riverbank Exchange. Mr. Gubb, in addition to his beliefs that he was the best paper-hanger in Riverbank County and the best detective ever graduated by the Rising Sun Correspondence School of Detecting, had a firm belief that he was the wisest speculator that ever bought oats on a margin. Oats were his specialty; he studied the oat market day and night, bought oats (on margin) and sold oats (on margin) and—Mr. Tidwell built one of the finest yellow pressed-brick mansions in Riverbank! Mr. Tidwell also took Mrs. Tidwell for a world tour. Mr. Tidwell bought a team of black carriage-horses and an automobile. The Riverbank Exchange was a good, old-fashioned bucket-shop, and Detective Gubb was its best and most persistent customer. Quite frequently, when Mr. Tidwell needed money, he condescended to give Mr. Gubb a tip on the oat-market.

"Mind you, Mr. Gubb," he would say, "I don't advise you to buy oats to-day. I never advise my customers. But I will say this much: I am going to buy oats to-day. I may not know oats as you know them, but I'm going to buy oats."

Mr. Gubb would consider this, letting his bird-like eyes blink wisely, and then he would buy oats. As Mr. Tidwell owned the bucket-shop and bought of himself when he did buy, it was hard for him to lose; Mr. Gubb almost invariably

lost. He was such a simple, infatuated speculator that Mr. Tidwell hardly had to "play" him at all.

For this reason Mr. Gubb took a blank check when he went to answer Mr. Tidwell's summons; he hoped Mr. Tidwell had "something good in oats," and he was sorry his bank-account was so low.

THE moment Mr. Gubb stepped out upon the street he saw something was wrong. The day was the second of August and Tuesday, and thus the second day of the Elk's Fair and Carnival; and Mr. Gubb had expected to see confusion and to hear noises not usually heard on Riverbank's quiet Main Street. He had already seen the aggregation of side-shows and fakers' tents that filled Main Street and ran a block or so up and down the Avenue, and he had seen the crowd of interested town and country people, and he had heard the cries of the barkers and the laughter and chatter of the crowd. To all this was now added the clanging of the bell of a fire engine, while the crowd pressed down the Avenue as if to see something more interesting than the street fair could offer. From the doorway of the Opera House Block, Mr. Gubb could see only too plainly the cause of the commotion: smoke and flames were pouring from the building in which the Riverbank Exchange was located. The Riverbank Exchange was being gutted by fire. If Mr. Tidwell had a "good thing in oats," there did not seem much chance for Mr. Gubb to partake of it. However, he pushed his way with the crowd until he was in the front row of spectators. In five minutes the fire was out.

"Oh, Gubb!" said a voice at Mr. Gubb's ear, and the detective turned to see Mr. Tidwell's bookkeeper standing beside him. "Say, Gubb, Mr. Tidwell telephoned for you—"

"The receipt of the message came to me while I was yet into my office," said Mr. Gubb. "I came on down as soon as I immediately could, but—"

"Well, that's all right," said the bookkeeper. "Tidwell told me to hunt you up and send you up to his house. He wouldn't have been here anyway. Appendicitis!"

"Mr. Tidwell? Taken with appendicitis?" asked Mr. Gubb, amazed.

"The very minute he telephoned you," said the bookkeeper. "His wife came into the Exchange—"

"That alone by itself wouldn't give no man the appendicitis," said Mr. Gubb.

"No, no!" said the bookkeeper. "Say, listen! Do you see those two fakers behind us there—those Hindoo fellows?"

Mr. Gubb turned his head. He could turn his head on his long, thin neck until it turned almost around completely—or so it seemed. Now he looked steadily at the two fakers to whom the bookkeeper had referred. They were brown fellows and robed in somewhat soiled white, their calves and feet bare, and white turbans on their heads. They sat on a narrow wooden platform before their tent, and a girl stood between them, her face brown, her hair black and her costume that of an East Indian nautch dancer. Above their heads was a banner with a portrait of a girl dancing madly, and the words, "LALLAH, THE NAUTCH GIRL, BEST TEN-CENT SHOW ON THE STREET."

Even as Mr. Gubb looked, a hard-faced man mounted the platform, rapped on a tin pan with a rattan withe and shouted that the show was now about to begin and that it cost only a dime, the tenth part of a dollar, two nickels or ten cents. As if this were the cue, one of the brown men began beating on a sort of tom-tom, and the other began tootling on a variety of tin whistles. The girl wiggled once or twice, took a few simple dance steps, smiled at the crowd and entered the tent.

"Well, listen!" said the bookkeeper; "I don't know what's up, but Mrs. Tidwell is scared out of her wits by those Hindoo fellows. She was scared yesterday when they set their tent right across from the Exchange; she wanted Tidwell to send for you then, but he laughed at her. He said—well, no matter what he said. But to-day—well, he sent for you, all right! And he wants you to chase right up to his house. You'd better hustle."

Mr. Gubb hustled. In answer to his ring, the massive oak door of Mr. Tidwell's mansion swung open, and Nellie,

the housemaid, led Mr. Gubb up the stairs to a bedroom on the next floor. It was evident that Mr. Gubb had been expected, for Nellie asked him no questions. She led him directly to Mr. Tidwell's room.

Including Nellie and Mr. Gubb, there were five persons in the bedroom. Mr. Tidwell lay in the bed, his usually reddish face pale with pain. By his side sat Mrs. Tidwell, a solid-looking woman of fifty, her usually calm features now drawn with anxiety. By the open window young Henry Tidwell stood, twisting the shade-cord around his finger.

As Mr. Gubb walked to the bed, Mr. Tidwell raised his head, groaned and motioned for Mrs. Tidwell to prop his head a little higher.

"Gubb!" he gasped. "Gubb, I'm in awful pain. They'll have to operate. Oh—oh! Gubb, the reason I sent for you—"

"Thomas, dear, let me tell him, precious!" said Mrs. Tidwell, in the throaty tone a woman sometimes uses when talking to a sick husband. "I'll tell him, dearie pet! You rest back and let me tell him."

"I tell you, Gubb, I haven't had anything but bad luck since I got the infernal stone. It's been one thing after another, one piece of bad luck after another—"

He fell back with another groan, and Mrs. Tidwell went on with the story.



The girl wiggled once or twice, and took a few simple dance steps.

"It's the Ghatghee, Mr. Gubb," she said. "It's a miserable butter-colored diamond with a flaw in it, and Thomas bought it in Bombay and had it set as a scarfpin."

"Hundred and fifty dollars," gasped Mr. Tidwell.

"Nellie, you may leave the room," said Mrs. Tidwell, noticing that the maid still remained. "He bought it in Bombay, and not until we got to Calcutta could I imagine why we had such awful accidents crossing India. Everything possible happened, Mr. Gubb, I assure you—not to me, but to Thomas. It all happened to Thomas. In Calcutta we went into another shop to look at some rings and the jeweler saw Thomas' pin and said: 'Pardon me, but that looks like the Ghatghee.' Of course we asked him what the Ghatghee was,

and he said it was a temple-jewel, one of the stolen temple-jewels of Benares, and that it had been missing for years. 'If I were you, sir,' he said to Thomas, 'I wouldn't wear that until I got out of India. It may not be the Ghatghee, but it looks like it, and these fanatics will stop at nothing to get back a stolen temple-jewel.' 'How romantic!' I said, '—just like "The Moonstone!" Is there any story about the Ghatghee?' The jeweler hesitated, I thought, and then said: 'Well, my lady, they do say it carries bad luck and always will until it returns to its rightful owner.' 'Thomas,' I said, 'give that stone away immediately!' 'The tale,' said the jeweler, 'is that bad luck does not go with the Ghatghee when it is given away—only when it is stolen or sold. If it is given away, the bad luck remains with the last purchaser or thief.' Of course, Thomas thought the man was trying to scare him into selling the Ghatghee cheap. He said, 'Nonsense!'

"I said, 'D——d nonsense!'" groaned Mr. Tidwell.

"And Mr. Gubb," said Mrs. Tidwell mournfully, "if you could know the bad luck that has followed poor Thomas ever since! Not a day and hardly an hour but something happens to him. He—he's all bunged up from falling and bumping, and his business is going down, and now it has burned up, and he has appendicitis, and—"

"Sally," said Mr. Tidwell, "you don't know half the things that have happened to me, you don't!"

"Well, Mr. Gubb, what I do know is bad enough," said Mrs. Tidwell. "And now, Mr. Gubb," she whispered darkly, "we are all going to be murdered in our beds!"

"My goodness mercy!" exclaimed Mr. Gubb.

"Oh, Mr. Gubb," she moaned, "you don't know half the awful things that happen when temple-jewels are stolen. Since Thomas bought that Ghatghee, I've read novels and novels and novels about stolen temple-jewels. Murder is nothing! Mr. Gubb, they're here!"

Mr. Gubb looked around the room.

"Whom are here, ma'am?" he asked.

"The Hindoos!" she whispered in an

awful voice. "I knew they would come, and they did. When I saw them in front of Mr. Tidwell's exchange yesterday, I said, 'We're dead! We're as good as murdered already. It is only a question of hours before we are all found with jeweled daggers sticking in our hearts!' Mr. Gubb, it is awful to know that—to know the Hindoos are on our track and to be able to do nothing!"

"If I was into your place at the present moment of time," said Mr. Gubb, "I wouldn't hesitate to wait another minute in the least. If I was into your place I would give that Gheeeghat joolry diamond right back to those there temple Hindoos."

The face Mrs. Tidwell raised showed her agony of mind by its helpless tenseness.

"Mr. Gubb," she breathed pantingly, "we can't! Heaven knows we would give the accursed thing to them if we had it, but we haven't! Thomas lost it!"

"My goodness mercy!" Mr. Gubb exclaimed again. "Aint that too bad!"

"Bad? It means death for us, Mr. Gubb, unless you can help us. They—those Hindoos—will come for the Ghatghee; they will think we are concealing it; they will murder us! Give it to them? Mr. Gubb, if Thomas had not lost the Ghatghee, would I hesitate?"

"About whereabouts did he lose it?" asked Mr. Gubb.

"I don't know and he don't know," sighed Mrs. Tidwell. "He thinks he remembers wearing it home one night and dropping it into his dresser drawer, and he never found it again."

"Perhaps it was stole," suggested the detective.

"Can you say that, with the bad luck clinging to Thomas as it is, and getting worse every day? No, Mr. Gubb, it was not stolen; it was lost, and you must find it. You must find it and place it where those Hindoos can find it and steal it, and you must do it before they murder us all! That is why I had Thomas send for you, Mr. Gubb."

"And—oh! oh!" moaned Mr. Tidwell, "I don't care what it costs! If I could get rid of—of that Ghatghee, maybe—maybe this pain would—would

stop! I wouldn't believe the bad-luck story until—until it came too thick for me, but—oh! oh!—I believe it now! Get busy, Gubb, get busy!”

“I will proceed to do so immediately at once,” said Mr. Gubb. “Just as instantly quick as I can make the preparations to begin to start, I will commence to begin. I will return back without waiting for any delay.”

Young Henry Tidwell ushered Mr. Gubb to the door and walked out upon the veranda with him.

“Ma always is a little nutty about all these old fairy-tales,” he said, “and she's ragged Pa about them until she's got him going too. All tied up in a knot like that with pain, Pa don't know whether he has a brain in his dome or not. I let 'em talk up there, Gubb, because they'd talk whether I let 'em or not, but I don't have to tell a man like you that all this Ghatghee-Hindoo-temple-jewel-murder-bad-luck stuff is all hot air. It's all right! You go ahead and humor them, if you want to. Poke around and wear a disguise and look wise. It'll ease Ma's mind and keep Pa's mind off his pain a little; but we know it is bunk, eh?”

Mr. Gubb looked at the young man sternly. He drew back his head and blinked his eyes, and his Adam's apple flopped up and down his long neck with indignation. Never had Mr. Gubb looked so much like an insulted flamingo.

“Mr. Tidwell,” he said reprovingly, “the young youthful mind of the present generation of folks aint fitten to decide into the depths of many kinds of things that come into the hands of detectkative persons for solution and finding out!” And with that he turned his back on Henry Tidwell and walked haughtily down the veranda steps and back to his office.

IN all his experience Mr. Gubb had never had quite such a case as this. As he walked toward his office he considered it. Here was a man owning a fairly valuable jewel, but the jewel was lost; he wanted the jewel found so it could be stolen; unless the jewel was found and then stolen, its present owner and his family might be murdered in

their beds by the very persons the owner of the jewel wished to have steal it! On the bottom step of the flight that led to the second floor of Opera House Block, Mr. Gubb stopped short. He had had an idea!

Mr. and Mrs. Tidwell were undoubtedly much overwrought by the chain of misfortunes the Ghatghee had brought about, and hardly in condition to consider matters calmly; they had called in Mr. Gubb because they were desperate, and it was his duty to be calm and think of all they had not thought of. First of all it was his duty as a detective to prevent if possible the murder of his two worthy clients; and as Mr. Gubb stood on the step leading to his office, the proper mode of doing this came to him as if by inspiration. From where he stood, looking down the Avenue and across Main Street, he could see the two Hindoos on their platform before their tent. It was plain enough that, to avoid suspicion, they would continue to masquerade as showmen until the street fair closed for the night, midnight being the time set by the city officials for the festivities to end each night. Until midnight, then, the Hindoos would attempt nothing; after midnight they could steal from their tent and undertake whatever vicious matters they had planned for the recovery of the Ghatghee. With admirable wisdom Mr. Gubb saw that if he went to the two bloodthirsty and revengeful Orientals and told them the jewel was lost but that as soon as it was found Mr. Tidwell was willing to have them steal it, the Hindoos would be willing to postpone their attack for a day or two.

In his room Mr. Gubb took from its hook on the wall the combination of garments and accessories known in the Rising Sun Detective Bureau's Supply Catalogue as “Disguise No. 18B, East Indian Snake-Charmer.” In investing \$18.40 in this disguise Mr. Gubb had felt some doubts as to whether he would ever be able to make use of it in Riverbank. The disguise was sumptuous in the extreme. When Mr. Gubb had shed his shoes and socks, browned his legs, feet, hands and face, placed the turban on his head and wrapped himself in the

folds of the single garment, he did not look like a pale flower born to blush unseen; he looked like the very dickens. The turban was of a loud and startling purple, and the robe of a violent and screaming red. Thus garbed, Mr. Gubb took the small woven-grass basket containing the "accessories" and went down the street.

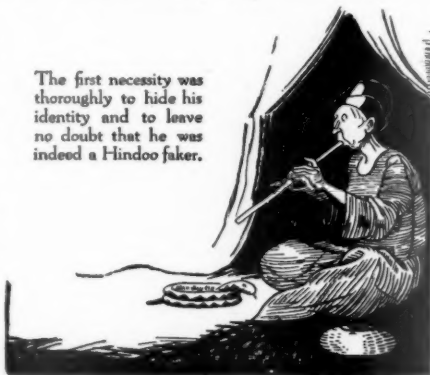
It was now the hour when all Riverbank went home to "supper," and the streets might have been called deserted. Only a few hundred stragglers still wandered about looking at the banners and booths.

"Gubb!" they whispered as the famous detective walked in brilliant stateliness down the Avenue; and the few hundred stragglers straggled after him. "He's going to detect," one whispered to another; "whenever he rigs up like a lunatic, he has something big on hand. Don't let on like we're following him, and maybe we can see him detect."

Ignoring the rabble as a detective should, Mr. Gubb proceeded direct to the tent of Lallah the Nautch Girl. The platform before the tent was deserted, and Mr. Gubb

climbed onto it. The first necessity was thoroughly to hide his identity and to leave no doubt that he was indeed a Hindoo faker; and he therefore seated himself on the platform and took from the grass-basket Accessory No. 1, which was a long and jointy serpent made of two shades of cotton cloth, green above and yellow beneath, stuffed with cotton. This he arranged in a jointy coil before him on the platform. He then took Accessory No. 2 from the basket. This was a long tin whistle. Mr. Gubb inserted it in his mouth, placed his forefinger over one of the holes and blew into the whistle, raising and lowering his finger gracefully. The music produced was like this:

The first necessity was thoroughly to hide his identity and to leave no doubt that he was indeed a Hindoo faker.



"Teet-toot! Teet-toot! Teet-toot! Teet-toot!"

As the cotton cobra did not arise and bite him, it is safe to say it was charmed; and having charmed it, Mr. Gubb gravely removed the whistle from his mouth, wiped it, replaced it in the basket, uncoiled the serpent and placed that in the basket, closed the lid, arose from the platform and entered the tent.

"Ah!" sighed the hundred stragglers. "There aint anybody can do detecting the way Philo Gubb can do it, is there!"

For a moment after he had entered the tent, Mr. Gubb stood in surprise. The small stage upon which Lallah performed her gyrations was hidden by a soiled canvas curtain, and the tent seemed at first to contain nothing but rows of undertakers' chairs; but a second glance assured Mr. Gubb that immediately in front of the stage and on what was normally the paving of the street stood a small portable sheet-iron stove. Sitting on one of the camp chairs before this stove, Lallah was cooking supper, while the two wicked-minded Hindoos

reposed at full length upon several chairs pushed together for the purpose. Mr. Gubb, with the instinct of the true detective, drew the tin whistle from his basket, slung the cobra over one shoulder and, playing the "teet-toot" melody, walked between the chairs toward the stage. Instantly the fair

Lallah stood erect with a spoon in her hand and said, in purest Hindoostanee: "Gosh, look who's here!"

The two Hindoos immediately sat up and looked. Mr. Gubb caught only the first word of Lallah's remark; he advanced, feeling suddenly a deep regret that he knew no Hindoostanee, but glad that he knew the name of one of the Hindoos with whom he had to deal. He stopped short before the two.

"You Gosh?" he asked of the smaller of the two men.

The small man looked at his fellow.

"Hully gee, Mike!" he exclaimed.

"Here's a real one!"

The larger man rose and pointed to the entrance.

"No job!" he said. "Plenty men. Understand? No job. Get out!"

For answer Mr. Gubb draped the cotton cobra over his arm, dropped the whistle into his basket, seated himself on one of the chairs and crossed his legs.

"You want Ghatghee?" he asked.

The two men looked at each other and then at Lallah.

"Ghatghee?" the little man said. "What the dickens is Ghatghee? Me no know Ghatghee. Ghatghee what?"

Mr. Gubb had expected this. The Hindoos would be wily; they would be tricky. He smiled knowingly.

"You want Ghatghee?" he asked again. "You want butter joolry? Want plenty bad?"

"Hey? Butter? No, got plenty butter. No want!"

"No kill Tidwell," said Mr. Gubb earnestly. "No use kill Tidwell. No got butter joolry. No got Ghatghee. Ghatghee lost. I find um; you steal um. No kill Tidwell."

"Well, — what — do — you — know — about — that!" exclaimed Lallah.

"No kill Tidwell to-day, to-morrow," insisted Mr. Gubb still more earnestly. "I find um Ghatghee; you steal um Ghatghee. O. K. All right. Yes?"

"Say—" said the tall man.

"Please no kill Tidwell to-day, to-morrow!" urged Mr. Gubb. "Temple butter diamond I find; you steal. No kill! No kill to-day, to-morrow. Next day kill, maybe. Yes O. K.?"

"Oh, yes, sure!" said the little man. "O. K., Bill. No kill, if that's what you want."

Mr. Gubb, having won the promise he sought, arose and extended his hand, first to the tall man and then to the short man. He removed his turban and bowed low to Lallah.

"Say, I wonder if he thinks he can collar the dough with that calico snake and a tin whistle when it has got so a

first-class dancer like me can't hardly drag in a crowd?" said Lallah when Mr. Gubb had departed. "I wonder what he thought he was talkin' about. It just shows I was right when Billy wanted to hire two real Hindoos to play my accomp'niment. 'Billy,' I says, 'don't you do it! You hire a couple o' honest Irish micks,' I says, 'an' then I'll feel safe. Them Orientals is all crazy,' I says. Was I right?"

"Sure you was right, Maggie," said the tall man. "Ghatghee! Tidwell! Crazy as a goat, he is."

HAVING thus successfully postponed the murder of the Tidwells for at least two nights, Mr. Gubb was ready to take up the matter of finding the lost Ghatghee, and he proceeded to the home of Thomas Tidwell. Hardly had Mr. Gubb seated himself on the veranda, with the calico snake coiled before his crossed legs, when Mrs. Tidwell opened the door to get the evening paper. She glanced once at Mr. Gubb's back and toppled over backward in a dead faint. By day she might have thought Mr. Gubb was a fire-sale of gaudy remnants, but in the dusk she was sure the murderous Hindoos were camping on the veranda. This was, perhaps, the highest point ever reached by Mr. Gubb in the art of disguise. Before that, people may have wanted to faint when they saw him disguised, but they had never actually fainted. It was a proud moment for Philo Gubb.

When Mrs. Tidwell had recovered from her fainting spell and had been reassured by a sight of Mr. Gubb under the full glare of the hall light, she listened with satisfaction to his report of what he had accomplished with the two Hindoos.

"Well, that's good!" she exclaimed. "I don't say I don't hate to be murdered, for I do, Mr. Gubb, but above all I'm glad my poor Thomas can suffer his pain in peace. The poor man is dying, and the doctors will not operate until to-morrow, and it is an awful thing to be murdered on your death-bed! It is bad enough for a person in full health to be murdered, but to be murdered when you are dying anyway is an awful thing!"

Mr. Gubb, with the instinct of the true detective, drew the tin whistle from his basket, slung the cobra over one shoulder and, playing the "teet-toot" melody, walked toward the stage.



"Murdering the dying is a thing no properly right-minded individual person would do," said Mr. Gubb sympathetically. "And now, Mrs. Tidwell, if there aint no objections, I will ascend upstairs to the floor above and start to begin my deteckative work where it ought to begin to commence, which is where the Ghatghee couldn't be found when it was lost."

From the stairs as they ascended they could hear the pitiful groans of Mr. Tidwell, for the owner of the lost Ghatghee was in great pain. There was nothing young Henry Tidwell could do for his father. The trained nurse, Miss Mackinnon, had left Henry in the room

for a few minutes while she attended to some duty elsewhere. No doubt the groans of Mr. Tidwell, who lay with his eyes closed, covered the sound of the approach of Mrs. Tidwell and Mr. Gubb, but as they entered the room, young Henry Tidwell, who was rummaging through the drawers of his father's dresser, started up and turned away with a flushed face.

"I—I was just having a look for the Ghatghee myself," he stammered. "Couldn't find it. I—I guess it is lost for good."

As he spoke, Mr. Tidwell on the bed uttered a long, deep sigh and ceased groaning. In an instant Mrs. Tidwell

was on her knees at her husband's side, and in the same instant young Mr. Tidwell, who had moved to the open window, uttered a cry of pain and there was a sound of cracking glass and of a heavy body falling.

"Oh! Thomas, Thomas, are you dead?" cried Mrs. Tidwell.

"Dead? No! Don't speak to me! Don't touch me! That—that pain is gone, Sally! It's—yes, by Jove!" he exclaimed, punching himself with his thumb, "it's gone!"

He was interrupted by a low groan from the window.

"Henry, dear!" cried Mrs. Tidwell. "Darling, what is the matter?"

"My hand!" groaned Henry. "The sash-cord broke, and the infernal window fell and smashed my fingers!"

"Poor, poor boy!" said his mother sympathetically from her kneeling place by the bed. "Run down and put some lotion on your fingers, dear. —Thomas," she begged, turning to her husband, "tell me you are not in pain."

Mr. Tidwell eased himself carefully upright. He tried punching himself with his thumb again. He drew a deep breath of relief.

"Why, I'm all right!" he said with surprise. "Sally, my luck has turned, I'll bet! I always said there was nothing in that Ghatghee idea— What's that?"

It was the sound of some one falling heavily down the hall stairs, ending with a thump as a head struck a newel-post at the bottom. It was Henry. Mr. Gubb and Mrs. Tidwell, when they reached him, raised him to his feet and steadied him between them. He was still dazed.

"I fell—" he mumbled. "I fell—"

As if "fell" were a cue for which it had been waiting, a large patch of plaster detached itself from the hall ceiling and, avoiding Mr. Gubb on one side and Mrs. Tidwell on the other, struck Henry on the top of the head.

It was several minutes before Henry opened his eyes; and then they carried him to the couch in the parlor and spread him out there to rest until he felt better. When Mr. Gubb went upstairs, he found Mr. Tidwell in an extremely happy state of mind.

"If you don't mind the bother of the nuisance, Mr. Tidwell," said Mr. Gubb, "I'll go right ahead to proceed to work. A detective whilst onto a job can't progress ahead until he has a clue to start beginning with, and I hope to find the discovery of one into this room. So far, there aint no hint of a clue as to where the Ghatghee is at—"

A pale face appeared at the doorway and was mirrored in the cheval glass that filled the wall between the two windows of the room. It was Henry.

"Father," he said unsteadily, "it is no use to have Gubb here. We've all looked for the Ghatghee, and if we can't find it, he can't. There's not the slightest clue, and—"

Without the least warning the cheval glass leaned forward slowly and fell full upon Henry, crashing to pieces and bearing him to the floor. Mrs. Tidwell, entering the room, clasped her hands and stared at Henry with horror in her eyes. Mr. Gubb assisted the prostrate young man to his feet and picked the pieces of glass from the small wounds in his cheek and neck.

"There aint no clue visible to sight at the present moment of time," he said; "but finding one is part of the portion of work a detective has to do. The kind of a joolry gem the Ghatghee is hadn't ought to disappear without leaving some clue of some shape or manner if a detective keeps his eyes open therefor."

"Henry," said Mrs. Tidwell, as her son turned to leave the room, "be very careful on the stairs."

The youth looked at her and flushed. "If you mean you think—" he began hotly, but stopped.

"It is no matter what I think, Henry," she said. "I say be careful on the stairs. Mr. Gubb," she added when her son had left the room, "I hope and trust you are not so ignorant as to believe any silly tales about jewels bringing bad luck to those who buy or—or steal them. Any such idea," she said with spirit, "would be the most utter nonsense. In fact—"

She stopped short and listened. In the lower hall Henry was answering a telephone call, and his voice came to them clearly.

"Margaret? Yes, this is Henry. But,

Margaret. . . . But I've done nothing to make you throw me over like this. . . . Send the ring back to me? But, Margaret. . . . No, wait one minute! Let me—Margaret! Margaret!"

They heard him hang up the receiver and move unsteadily down the hall. Mrs. Tidwell hid her face in her hands and bowed her head in sorrow. Henry's alliance with Margaret had been one of her fondest hopes, and now it was ended! In the hall below, Henry Tidwell stood with his hand on the newel-post, and his head was bent too, but in deep and agonized thought. Slowly his right hand—the one unhurt by the falling window—crept to his pocket, and from the pocket he drew a scarfpin. What pressing youthful debts had led him to steal the trinket when he found it a short while before in his father's dresser-drawer we need not ask. The moment he had stolen it, the ill luck had deserted his father and had fallen upon him.

Two motives urged him to do what he did next. One was a great and growing fear of what would happen to him in the way of ill luck if he retained the Ghatghee in his possession another hour, and the second was the knowledge that anyone but Philo Gubb would have seen in the sudden shifting of bad luck a clue that could not be ignored. It was only because Philo Gubb was a graduate of the Rising Sun Detective Bureau's Correspondence School of Detecting, which, in Lesson VII, gives a complete list of clues to be looked for, including buttons with patches of cloth adhering to them, strands of hair, and so forth, and because Philo Gubb would welcome no other kind, that Henry had escaped suspicion thus long. Any moment Mr. Gubb might, through his famous and irrational luck, fall upon the fact that Henry had stolen the Ghatghee. With a glance around to see that he was not observed, Henry entered the parlor. He bent over an upholstered chair and ran the pin through the tapestry, bending the point sharply upward. Then he went into the hall and called Mr. Gubb.

The famous detective descended the

stairs, walking gingerly over the plaster bits that littered the hall floor, and followed Henry into the parlor.

"Come here," said Henry Tidwell, beckoning Mr. Gubb to the chair. "Now, I think you are going to have a hard time finding this Ghatghee thing, Mr. Gubb," he said. "It's going to be the deepest mystery you ever tackled, and I just want to say that I'm going to help you in every way I can, but—but it's getting late, and I think before we get to work you ought to have a—a sandwich and a—a glass of lemonade. If you'll sit down until I come back—"

He turned and hurried from the parlor. Mr. Gubb sighed with satisfaction and dropped into the chair.

Instantly he arose again.

Five minutes later he entered Mr. Tidwell's bedroom, a sandwich in one hand and the Ghatghee in the other.

"Found it, hey?" cried Mr. Tidwell joyfully. "Gubb, you are a wonder; that's what you are—a wonder! How the dickens did you ever do it?"

Mr. Gubb blinked his bird-like eyes solemnly.

"Into the detectakative business, sir," he said with gravity becoming in so great a detective, "some styles of mental brain-work enter in which the ordinary common mind couldn't understand."

"Well, now you've got the thing," said Mr. Tidwell, "I don't care what you do with it. I don't want it around here. You can have it. Or you can let those Hindoo wops steal it."

"A detectakative hadn't ought to encourage the crimes of the criminal classes," said Mr. Gubb, "whether Hindoo or otherwise. If I should make a bargain of a sale to them of it for a dime or so I should think that would be sufficiently enough."

"Do it!" said Mr. Tidwell heartily. "Who is that downstairs?"

It was Henry—at the telephone.

"Well, all right then, Margaret," he was saying. "I knew it must be some mistake, honey girl. Of course! Why, certainly! Yes, I'll come right over."

The curse was off the house of Tidwell.

Another exploit of Philo Gubb in the next—the June—issue.

IT is the law of the circus that when the season ends, all debts shall be paid, all love-stories told, the slate wiped clean.

THE last of
the Shoe-
string Char-
ley stories.



By
Courtney
Ryley
Cooper

ILLUSTRATED
BY R. M.
BRINKERHOFF

W HERE
the flar-
ing ban-
ners of
the "kid show"

Warpin' In

cast their elongated shadows toward the marquee roamed Shoestring Charley, his cigarette hanging from his lips, his hands behind him, his shoulders hunched.

Here and there about the circus lot the dust swirled in little eddies with the currents of the afternoon breeze. From the far side of the menagerie "top" came the clacking of sledges as hurrying workmen "guyed out" against the winds of evening, tightening the ropes that led from the great stretches of dun-colored canvas and making them safe against the possible blow of the night.

From beyond the marquee, or entrance to the big show, there came the clanging of the starter's bell as the chariot racers trundled about the hippodrome track, a signal for the "grinding" or "spieling" to begin on the ballyhoo stands of the "kid show" and the animal shows. A moment more, and the matinée audience would come piling forth—and the outside attractions must be ready for their harvests. Shoestring glimpsed it all, puffed absently at his cigarette and walked on. His head bowed the slightest bit at a touch of crispness in the breeze.

"Twelve more stands," he murmured,

and shifted the stub of his cigarette to a corner of his lips. "She's a-warpin' in. They've dropped the pilot, and they're a-layin' out the hawsers. The good old tugs are a-puffin' and she's a-easin' up the river. Twelve more stands," he murmured again; "she's a-warpin' in!"

To those who hurried out of the menagerie tent and jammed before the attractions of the "kid show," it meant nothing. But to Shoestring Charley, wandering about at the edge of it all, it meant everything. Out in the dressing-tent the last route-sheet had been hung below the chandeliers, the last stand of the season had been announced and the World Famous was ending its long, long journey of the summer. Twelve days more of performances, and there would come the "home run," when for days the circus train would grind along toward the North, toward the snows and rushing machine-shops and steam-heated menagerie houses. Twelve days more, and the band would cease to blare, the glitter of the parade would fade under the canvas coverings that would protect the wagons till the springtime came again. Twelve more days—

Two hurrying forms passed, then stopped and rejoined each other a few feet from Shoestring. One of them dug into a pocket, and his face became doleful.

"Gosh, Fuzzy!" he exclaimed at last. "I guess I've lost it!"

"What?" Fuzzy came nearer, mildly curious. The other still searched.

"Two bits I was goin' t' give you. 'Member that two bits I promised you for takin' care o' the ponies when I got my foot smashed down t' Carrollton? Remin' me of it pay-day, and I'll square up. They've posted the closin' stand, y'know."

"Have they?" Fuzzy's eyes popped with interest. "Huh, if that's so, that two bits'll help wonderful, Soapy. I owe Rags Jordan a dollar 'n' a half!"

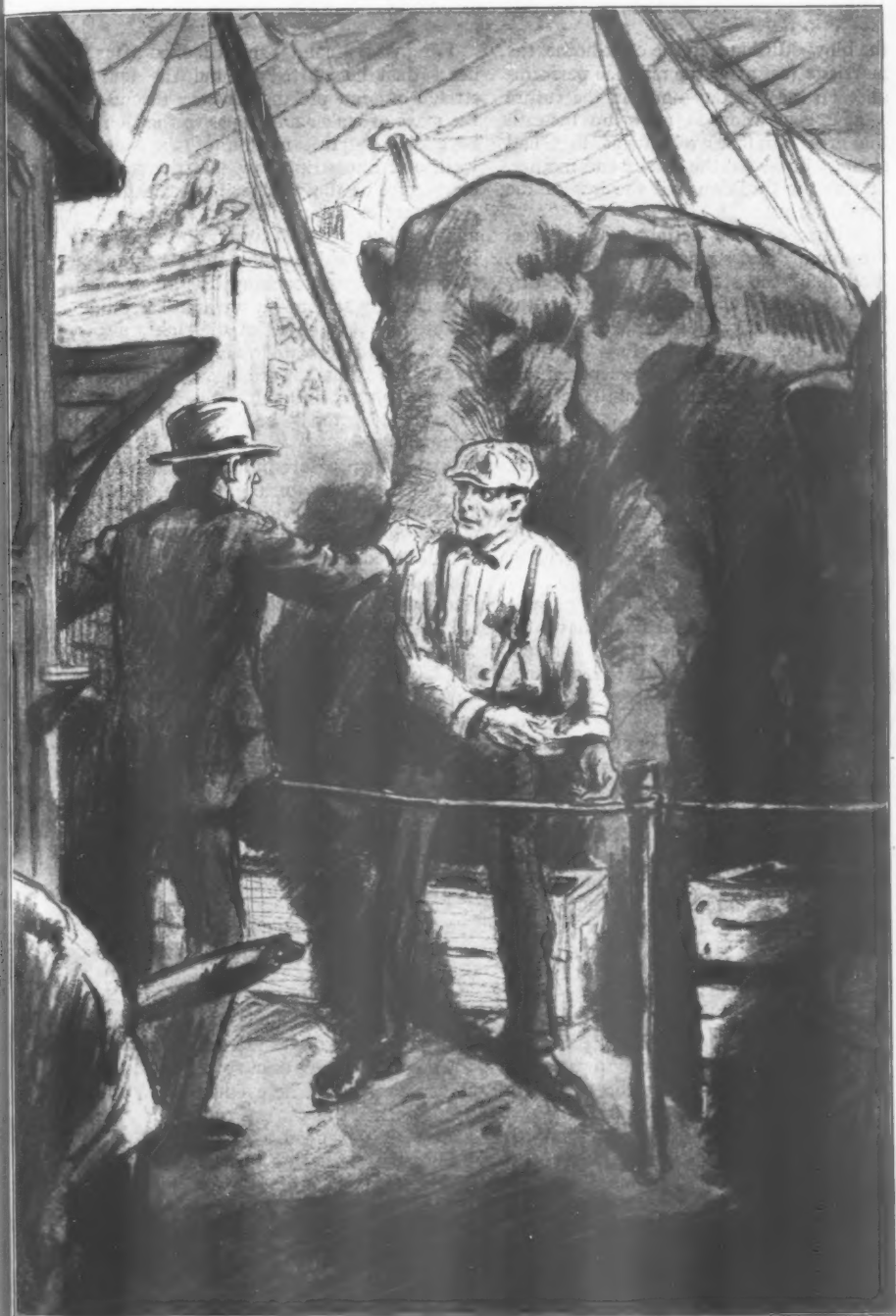
Shoestring puffed slowly and thoughtfully at his cigarette as he watched the pony "punks" fade into the mistiness of dying day. The old boat was warping in; soon the season would be over. For two weeks now would come the time

of settling up; debts would be paid, grudges forgotten in handshakes or fought into eternal enmity; friendships would be made forever or broken for all time to come. The last route-card had gone into place—the old boat was warping in, and by the law of the big top, when the end came every debt must be settled, every account square and the slate wiped clean.

SHOESTRING stood there by the menagerie-tent, staring ahead, until his cigarette burned his lips. Then slowly he wandered onward to the horse-tents, to the chandelier-wagon where Smoky Joe bawled forth innumerable verses of the "Nigger Blues" to the distant accompaniment of the "kid show" band as he prepared the lights for the night, to the blacksmith shop, then finally toward the dressing-tent and the pad-room.

Suddenly he stopped, and leaned against the battered side of the stake- and chain-wagon, while his hands went instinctively for his makin's. The old boat was a-warpin' in—and the final evidence was before him. There by the draw-curtained flags which shut off the big top from the pad-room stood a man and a woman, silent for the most part, the man pulling aimlessly at a tight-stretched guy-rope, the woman fingering the worn stripes of the flags. Now and then would come the sound of their voices, low and earnest—then silence again. But Shoestring needed no explanation. He had seen the old boat warp in before, season after season, bringing always its inevitable romance of the pad-room—and he needed no words to tell him what was going on over there by the flags. It is by the traditions of generation after generation of sawdust-bred ancestors that the circus performer lives. And it is by tradition that the cluttered-up space beyond the draw-curtain of the big top, known as the pad-room, forms the spot where every real romance of the sawdust ring must culminate.

So Shoestring watched, a queer little light of happiness in his eyes, his cigarette hanging unlighted from his lips. He knew the program that would follow—the announcement of the engagement at



"Yes sir." Shorty looked up from the examination of an elephant's hoof. "I bumped into him in the connection a minute or two ago. I was kinda hurryin', and he was runnin' or somethin' of the kind. Anyway, we didn't see each other, and—"

the blow-off dinner in the cook-house, the marriage just after the matinée performance on the last day—and in the future a new generation to grow up beneath the great stretches of canvas that had sheltered and fed the father and mother. It was the tradition and the law of the sawdust ring.

With a childish delight in his eaves-dropping, Shoestring watched while Trelini of the slack-wire took the tiny hands of La Chiquita Marie of the lions, watched while the low, earnest voices drifted unintelligibly to him, watched while the shadows deepened and the romance of the pad-room came into its own.

Far out in front, the first torch of dusk sent forth its flaring rays. A shout from the distance, and the fluttering canvas of the cook-house—first in the progress of packing up—slowly sank to the ground, as hurrying workmen began the work of loading that would last for hours. From beyond the big top came the clanging of the steel triangle on the ballyhoo stand, as the spielers began their initial "lectures" of the evening. Shoestring turned idly—then suddenly straightened.

His eyes narrowed. He hunched himself deeper into the shadow of the wagon. Some one else was watching that romance of the pad-room, some one who had half hidden himself within a belly of the side-wall and whose motive was apparent in his every action. Shoestring dropped his unlighted cigarette and rammed his hands deep into his pockets. The little form of La Chiquita Marie was tight in the arms of Trelini now—but Shoestring's eyes were not upon them.

"Somebody aint tickled to death," he murmured, as he squinted toward the half-hidden form against the side-wall. "Either he's jealous or I'm crazy!"

He started forward, then stopped. The lips of La Chiquita Marie and Trelini had met. The sacred promise of the pad-room had been made; a moment more, and there came the sound of a happy, womanly laugh, then a man's voice in answer. The little animal-trainer had turned, bounded away from Trelini, and faded into the dressing-tent.

For just a second Trelini looked after her; then he started around the long stretch of tent, picking his way through the maze of stakes and ropes to the light beyond. A quick motion of the side-wall, and Shoestring saw that the shadowy figure of the watcher had vanished. A moment more, and the side-wall moved again, a hundred feet away, and a hurtling form leaped through the air at the throat of the approaching Trelini.

A choking scream—a scream of death. Shoestring, unmindful of the stakes and ropes, leaped forward. He swerved, he swung his arms toward the cook-house gang—then ran on again.

"To the big top!" he shouted. "Bring lights!"

Again from before him there came the sound of a voice, strangling, gurgling. He stumbled, then whirled to the side of a crumpled form on the ground. A match flared, and Shoestring looked into the spasm-ridden face of Trelini of the slack-wire. The bubbles of death were on his lips. A broad-bladed knife, its course half severing his throat, still lay in place, and trembled with the gushing flow of blood. From the distance had come shouts; men were stumbling forward in the darkness; others followed with torches. The little form of the showman bent close to the ground, and his sinewy hands clutched at the shoulders of the dying man.

"Durniere?" he asked sharply. "Answer me! Was it Durniere?"

The torches flared closer. The strong hands of the showman gripped tighter at the shoulders of Trelini of the slack-wire.

"Answer me!" he ordered again. "It was Durniere, wasn't it?" Shoestring bent closer. "Answer me—answer me!"

The lips moved ever so slightly, but no sound came. The eyelids closed and then opened again. Trelini of the slack-wire was dead.

Shoestring Charley turned sharply to look into the face of Hudson, his manager, hurrying under the guy-ropes. The form of the showman straightened. His eyes were glittering.

"Find Chiquita!" There was the sharpness of a seldom-awakened excitement in his voice. "Break it to

her as easy as you can. Somebody ducked under the side-wall and knifed him." Suddenly he pulled Hudson aside and whispered. "As soon as you can get a line on Durniere, put somebody to trailing him," he ordered. "Now hurry!"

Hudson vanished into the darkness. Shoestring Charley swerved to his workmen.

"Pick him up easy, guys. Get the gilly-wagon and take him to my car. Tell Hudson to see the coroner as soon as he gets through with Marie. Hear me?"

And he too had ducked under the side-wall, to stop a moment under the seats, to light a match or two and then to hurry on again. Toward the glare of the menagerie-tent he went and then halted before Shorty Ennis, keeper of the elephants.

"I'm looking for Durniere," he said shortly; "seen him?"

"Yes sir." Shorty looked up from the examination of an elephant's hoof. "I bumped into him in the connection a minute or two ago. I was kinda hurryin', and he was runnin' or somethin' of the kind. Anyway, we didn't see each other, and—"

"Runnin', huh?" Shoestring's eyes had become mere slits. "Which way'd he go?"

"Out through the flap of the connection and—huh! wonder where I got that?" The stocky elephant-man was examining a splotchy smear of red on his shirt. "Wonder if this bull's been bleedin'—"

But his voice ceased. Shoestring had suddenly come forward, to look at the shirt and then to reach for the side-wall.

"Take off that shirt and put it away—just the way it is," he ordered tersely.

"Don't tell anybody what you know. Somebody just bumped off Trelini of the slack-wire, and we've got to get busy. Now keep tight—until something breaks. Understand?" The head of the showman shot forward. "And if anybody asks for me, I'm busy!"

He raised the side-wall and waited for an answer. It came in a bob of the head, as Shorty Ennis, faithful employee of years, reached for his collar. Just a moment Shoestring hesitated. Then he

ducked under the side-wall and hurried for the cars a half-mile away.

An hour later, a bundle under his arm, he peered through the doorway of his private car, to see the crumpled form of a woman kneeling beside the bed of his stateroom, her arms outstretched and clutching. Steadily there came her voice in the moan of a woman who mourns with the very fibers of her soul.

Shoestring pulled forth his makin's and rolled a cigarette slowly. Then he stepped from the car with its scene of death and stumbled through the darkness toward the one in which Hudson had his stateroom. The match flared as Shoestring stopped to light his cigarette—and in the blaze of it, his face was lined and hard.

"A-warpin' in," he said slowly, "a-warpin' in!"

His manner changed. He swung up the steps of Hudson's car, hurried in, glanced quickly at the manager across the table and motioned toward the windows.

"Pull those curtains," he ordered quickly. "Joe!"

The chef of the car showed in the doorway.

"Yes sir."

"You're through for the night, aint you? Beat it out to the show-lot and get some o' them dames out there to come down an' be with Chiquita Marie. She's bustin' her heart out—it aint right. Tell the wardrobe-woman and some o' them other Janes that's doin' nothing out there to come down t' the cars and see if they can't make themselves useful for once. And hurry 'em. I want 'em to get Marie away from that corpse. She'll go nuts in another hour or so. Hear me? Now beat it!"

The chef faded from the doorway. Shoestring, still hugging his bundle, turned to Hudson.

"How about the coroner?"

"Out of town. Wont be back until about eight. I'll get hold of him as soon as I can. Guess we'll ship him back home—eh?"

"Depends on what Marie wants." Shoestring's voice was strangely sharp and snappy. He stepped forward and locked the door of Hudson's stateroom.



He was again the actor, cool, smiling, self-possessed, far easier of bearing and demeanor as he faced the beasts before him than when he had faced his conscience.

"Who's going to work the lion-act to-night?"

"Durniere."

"Good. Marie wont be able to work for a week. A fine stunt, eh—this thing, when we're warpin' in? Sure Durniere's going to work them lions?" Shoestring was half bent over the table, the bundle still hugged tightly under his arm.

"Yes sir."

"Who've you got trailing him?"

"Sharply, Rags Jordan, Terrill and Foster."

"All good men?"

"They were the best I could think of. They're the ones that naturally hang around him most—and they're all faithful. They've been with us long enough. And none of 'em like Durniere any too well. Nobody does, for that matter. Say,"—and he turned to his employer,—
"you don't think—"

"Think what?" Shoestring had pulled the bundle from beneath his arm and was holding it before him. "That Durniere's the guy that bumped off Trelini? No, kid, I don't think a thing about it. I *know*!"

"You know?" Hudson had half risen. Shoestring dragged excitedly at his cigarette, then loosened the flaps of the bundle.

"There's a part of the evidence," he said.

Before them lay a coat, the right arm of which was crusted with spurts of blood, even to the elbow. Upon the shoulder there showed a splotch where the first stream from the jugular of Trelini of the slack-wire had stained it. A few grains of earth sprinkled on the table as Shoestring laid the coat aside. He picked up a collar and fingered it. High on the rim there showed a semi-circular spot of blood—a fragmentary splotch from the stream which had stained the arm and the shoulder of the coat. A second more, and he was holding a shirt before Hudson, its right cuff stiff and crumpled with dried blood. And all bore the smears of fresh earth.

"Look at the laundry marks," came sharply from Shoestring Charley. The show manager obeyed.

"O. E. D.," he quoted slowly, as he held them closer to the light, "—that's his initials."

Shoestring waved a hand.

"Just the beginning, kid," he answered, and moistened a frayed bit of his cigarette. "That's just the lead-off. There's enough dope against that guy. He was nuts over Marie, wasn't he?"

Hudson laughed.

"Nuts? You couldn't let a squirrel within ten feet of him. It doesn't jar me any to find it out—I've seen him in that lion-den helping Chiquita when Trelini would sneak past the flags to watch her act, and so help me, you wouldn't know which was the wildest, Durniere or the lions. But I didn't figure he'd pull a thing like this; I just thought it'd be a fight or—or something like that."

"It was a murder—just cold, stick-'em-in-the-back murder, that's all," Shoestring answered as he shuffled the collar about in his hand and gazed ab-

stractedly at the bloodstain. "And he let it get away from him. Tom Rollins, the clown, seen him bury this stuff out there in the weed-patch, beyond the cars. He didn't know there was anybody in the car but himself, I guess, when he came in. Tom was up in a three-high bunk, nursin' that bump on the head he got in the hippodrome races. He heard Durniere talkin' to himself, and he got nuts to know what was goin' on. He seen Durniere change clothes and wrap up these here. Then he watched him through the ventilator when he buried 'em."

"Strong enough."

"Strong? Say-y-y-y,"—and Shoestring hunched over the table,—“a ten-year-old limburger aint in it! Look here!”

He pulled forth a little tin and opened the lid. Within were a few crusted bits of blood.

"The porter dug 'em out of the bowl in the lavatory of the car," he announced. "They settled there as the water run out after he'd went and washed his hands. The poor simp' didn't even take the precaution to rinse the bowl. Of all the boobs!" Shoestring's expression was scathing. Hudson, serious as he was, laughed.

"Maybe it's the first murder he ever pulled off," he answered. Shoestring dropped his cigarette to the floor and stepped on the burning end. He reached once more for his makin's and then pulled the empty scabbard of a hunting knife from his pocket.

"Got that knife?" he asked absently, as he turned the scabbard over and over in his hands. Hudson reached into a drawer of the table and brought forth the bloodstained blade that had ended the life of Trelini. Shoestring took it gingerly. He dropped it into the scabbard, and the fit was perfect. "Thought so," he murmured. "Found this in his grip. Hudson,"—and the eyes of Shoestring narrowed,—“that Durniere's the guy! He's the bird I seen hidin' there by the side-wall, and I'm sure of it. He seen Trelini coming and ducked under and out again—then knifed him. There aint no doubt about it!”

Hudson fingered the clothes before him.

"Not to my mind," he said at last. "And I don't think there'd be any doubt in a jury's mind either. I guess there's only one thing to do: that's to pipe off the coroner when he comes, grab hold of the chief of police, tip him to what we know and pull off a pinch."

"A pinch? Are you nuts?" Shoestring was leaning over the table again. "Listen, kid; this aint no New York run we're playin'. This here show's got to move. D'you know what it'd mean if we pulled off a pinch—here? It'd mean that you'd stay over, and I'd stay over, and Shorty, and the cook-house gang that was there when Trelini died, and the porter, and Tom Rollins and—well, half the show that knew anything about it one way or the other. And where'd the op'ry be all this time? Oh no, kid, that may be all right for somethin' else, but not for the show game. What we got to do is to stall this guy along until the closin' date, keep him watched all the time, seal up all these guys that know anything, and then on the last day o' the season waltz this guy to the hoosgow. But we can't do it now—we wouldn't have no show left. Get me? Now see if you can raise that coroner. I'm goin' to blow out to the lot and see how things is goin'."

AND out at "the lot" things were going in the usual way. Before the "kid show" the ballyhoo men were roaring, just as they had roared for a hundred and fifty consecutive days throughout the season. Within, the band was blaring with its slurring, trombone-heightened music. Under the marquee, the "push" was piling through the gates, while ticket-takers bawled their instructions and concession men roared the merits of their wares. Shoestring lifted the rope of a gate and ducked into the menagerie-tent. A hulking form passed him, as Mamma, head of the elephant herd, dragged a lion's cage into the main tent and backed it against the steel arena, in preparation for the acts of the night. On a bale of hay beyond the hippopotamus-den sat the equestrian director, a pad of paper before him, figuring. He looked up at the approach of Shoestring Charley.

"Think I've got it fixed up all right on that aerial number," he said. "I'll swing the Flying Musettes in there, instead of in their single act. Think it'll go better, anyway. Chiquita aint workin' to-night?"

"No." Shoestring looked into the distance toward the slowly filling big top. The equestrian director returned to his figuring.

"Durniere said he didn't think she'd be able to. Said he'd handle the lion act alone."

"Did he?" Shoestring asked the question somewhat aimlessly. "Seen Rags Jordan or Sharply?"

"Yeh—both of 'em. They were in here just a minute after I was talking to Durniere. Aint got a line on who bumped Trelini off?"

"Not a scratch!"

Shoestring wandered on. The inexorable rule of the sawdust ring was working—death, illness, disaster, all the events of the calendar, might come and go, but still the bands must play, still the lights must flare and the show go on.

The crowds grew heavier. Shoestring, standing in the connection between the menagerie-tent and the big top, watched the seats fill, watched the band as it moved from the ring to the flags, watched the entry as it boomed around the hippodrome track; then suddenly he peered forward, alert, intense. The entry was over; one by one the lions came forth from their cages to be prodded through the trapdoor leading to the great steel arena and take their places on their various pedestals. And smiling to the audience as he swished here and there among the wild beasts, was Durniere. There was no indication of the nervousness and lack of foresight that had led him to make the blunders which might some day send him to the gallows or the electric chair. He was again the actor, cool, smiling, self-possessed, far easier of bearing and demeanor as he faced the beasts before him than when he had faced his conscience. Shoestring frowned the least bit, then smiled.

"He thinks he's got away with it," he muttered.

Then he turned and once more hurried for the cars. And when dawn came to the rocking train as it ground its course along toward the next stand, the rays of light found Shoestring Charley exactly where he had taken his place hours before, seated in the narrow little aisle of a performer's car, watching beside the berth of a little woman who grieved for one who was dead. His lids were heavy; now and then they closed, but they jerked open again, and he smiled as he saw that she slept. Slowly he stooped, gathered up the cigarette-stubs which lay about him and tiptoed with them to the door.

"I'll kinda look after her now." It was the wardrobe woman. "I never thought I was sleepin' so long. Maybe you'd better get some rest yourself, Mister Charley?"

"Rest?" Shoestring grinned, in spite of his heavy eyelids. "Nix on that; all I'm after is a cup o' black coffee and a cigarette. Me for a gambler's breakfast, and I'll whip my weight in wildcats. Kinda watch her, will you?" There was a tender little something in Shoestring's voice. "If she yelps for me, send somebody to my car. I'll be there all morning."

A half-hour later he was in the office of his car, stirring the black depths of his "gambler's breakfast." Hudson, slouched in his chair, sat across the table.

"I thought it was the wisest thing to do," the manager was saying. "So I just left a couple o' hundred bucks with the undertaker and told him to ship the body home. I couldn't square the coroner, and so I left three or four of the cook-house guys over for the inquest to-day—just enough for 'em to have some kind of witnesses. The jury'll return a 'causes unknown' verdict."

Shoestring puffed at his cigarette, then tried the heat of his coffee.

"What's Durniere doin'?" he asked suddenly. Hudson squinted his eyes.

"Acts kinda nervous this morning. First guy up in the car. Maybe it's just his conscience; I don't think anybody's cracked anything to him."

"You're trailin' him?"

"Oh, sure." Hudson leaned across the

table. "But at that, if he wanted to blow, he could make his get-away all right. I—"

The sentence died as both men half started from the table. Wan, pale, hollow-eyed, La Chiquita Marie stood framed in the doorway, the horror of the night before still visible in her worn features, her hands clasped. She looked half hesitatingly at the manager; then she came slowly forward. Shoestring rose and held forth his hand.

"Sit down, Marie," he ordered gently. The little animal-trainer turned her eyes toward the manager.

"Mister Hudson—he go, huh?" she asked in a repressed voice.

"Sure!" Hudson was on his feet. "I was just loafing, anyhow. I'll watch after that other thing, Mr. Grenolds," he added as he started toward the doorway. Shoestring nodded and then flipped his half-burned cigarette out the window.

"Sit down, Marie," he ordered again. The little Franco-Spanish woman obeyed. For a moment she stared wearily at the table before her; then she raised her head, and her black eyes were glittering.

"What you t'ink about dees Durniere—huh?" she asked quickly. Shoestring smiled. He began rolling a cigarette.

"Nix on them things," came his half drawling answer. "Drop all that stuff, kid, and think about something else. I aint—"

"What you t'ink—huh?" The question was persistent. "He mak' love to me, you know t'at?" The tiny hands of La Chiquita Marie clenched and pressed hard against the table. All the fire of her Spanish blood had suddenly flared into flame. "He mak' love to me. He say if he no have me, t'en nobody have me. What you t'ink t'at mean—a knife in t'e t'roat—huh?"

Shoestring Charley had seen the same sort of a light that now gleamed in the eyes of La Chiquita Marie in the eyes of the lions and tigers she trained. Slowly he finished the rolling of his cigarette. Slowly he placed it between his lips. Slowly he struck a match and watched its flame a moment before he touched it to the tube of tobacco.

"Marie," he began quizzically, "what'd you say if I told you that I had enough dope on Durniere to hang him higher'n a kite? What'd you—"

"Say?" The little form of La Chiquita Marie had suddenly straightened. Her fingers were tapping the table with telegraphic swiftness. Her face grew hard—and cold.

"What I say? I say not'ing. *Sí!* I say not'ing! But dees Durniere—mebbe he get a knife like Trelini! No! I say not'ing!" She spread her hands in a quick shrug and then flattened them on the table. "I say not'ing—I act!"

"You're not going to do any fool thing of the kind!" Shoestring had circled the table and was half leaning over her. "You're going to do what I tell you to do, Marie. Are you listenin'? I'll give you the straight goods. Durniere's the guy. He's the boy that swung the knife, and we've got the dope on him. And we're going to hang him, too, when we get started on him. But you've got to kick in with some help—get me?"

He puffed rather snappily at his cigarette. La Chiquita Marie, trembling in her intensity, stared straight ahead. "Now, get me, kid. You aint going to pull any fool woman-stuff and crab this act. You're going to play the game like I want you to. We can't pull off a pinch now—we'd have to leave half the show behind to even testify at the preliminary examination. We're going to slide this guy along and cream him up and make him think he's kissed himself out o' this jamboree; then we're goin' to slough him on the last day o' the show, when we've got plenty o' time to look after the decorations and other things for a good bumpin'-off party. An' you know what you're gointa do?"

"Police!" she sneered. "You tak' heem to t'e police. T'en he fool aroun' an' fool aroun'; bimeby he get loose! And all t' time, Trelini, he lay dead. Police!" She shrugged her shoulders in derision. "*Sacré!* No!"

"Now, can that junk, Marie." Shoestring's voice took on a tone of mollifying argument. "That's stage-stuff, anyway. Whatta we going to do—take this guy out and execute him ourselves, or something o' the kind? Or let you stick

a knife in his back—an' carry you meals for three or four years? Say, listen: you aint over in Spain or down in Mexico. You're in the United States, where every State's got a boardin'-house—and there's a thunder of a lot o' competition for customers. Besides that, I need you with the show next year."

He looked into the face of La Chiquita Marie and saw that the spasm of anger was passing.

"Now listen, kid, we don't want this guy to get away from us. What we want to do is to hang something on him that'll stick him to the show tighter'n a porous plaster. That something's yourself. Call him all the names you want to behind his back, but when you see him, smile a bit and lean on him for sympathy. Say, there aint a guy in the world don't fall for that sympathy stuff. All you got to do—"

"Me? After he keel Trelini? After he—"

"Now nix, Marie!" Shoestring held up a remonstrating hand. "You train wild animals; you aint one yourself. It's only ten days or so, and all the time we're diggin' up stuff and he's thinkin' he's safe. Don't you see? And the more you stall him, the more we dress him up for a rope and a wood kimona. Can't you grab me, kid? Now listen: old Shoestring Charley never gave you a bum steer in his life—now wont you play his game?"

For a long time, La Chiquita Marie stared straight ahead. Then suddenly she rose.

"I play z' game!" she said at last. Shoestring grinned and struck a new match to his cigarette.

"Fair enough, kid," he answered. "Now get busy!" Then as the door closed on the nervous little figure of the animal-trainer, he slumped into a chair and watched the smoke of his cigarette curl toward the ventilators. "I wonder if she means it?" he asked himself, and puffed thoughtfully.

THE answer came a few hours later, as Hudson pushed his somewhat surprised face in the doorway. Shoestring was deep in figures; papers were massed before him—but he scrambled them into



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a pile and threw them into his desk at the sight of his manager.

"Seen a flock o' ghosts or somethin'?" he asked. Hudson smiled.

"Worse than that. What's the idea, Shoestring?"

"What idea?"

"About Marie. Did you sick her on Durniere?"

"Yeh." Shoestring reached lazily for his makin's. "Did you see 'em?"

"See 'em?" Hudson's eyes widened. "Eatin' dinner together!"

A narrow smile came to Shoestring's lips.

"Good. Was she bullin' him?"

A chuckle from across the table. Hudson waved a hand.

"Bullin' him? Oh no! She just had him blown up to a hundred and eight and still going, that's all. Did you tell her not to work the lion act any more?"

Shoestring glanced up.

"No, I didn't, but I meant to. I guess she got my hunch, though. What was she saying?"

Hudson rammed his hands in his pockets and rocked on his heels.

"It wasn't so much what she said as the way she acted," he answered. "That leanin' stuff—you know. Now that Trelini was gone she had to have some good friend—all that sort o' junk. And he'd always been so wonderful in handling the lions, even to Prince when he was on a rampage, that she'd just turned to him in her time of trouble." Hudson smiled. "I was sittin' right next to 'em, and say, that guy swelled up like a couple o' balloons. Had her promising him to watch him work the lions this afternoon and all that stuff. I think I'll be sticking around myself; that guy's just crazy enough to pull something good."

"Me too," answered Shoestring Charley between puffs. "Right in the first row!"

And Durniere kept his promise. From the assistant, handling the prod-rod behind the spangled little Marie, he had become the principal now. There was a snap and a forcefulness to his performance that almost wiped out the handicap of masculinity. Here and there about the great steel arena he dashed,

flashing before the lions as they mounted their pedestals or padded their way to their various formations, laughing, joking, cracking his bull-whip—as restless as an autumn wind, he slashed the act through its various phases with a staccato touch that almost equaled the verve of La Chiquita Marie herself.

Time after time the applause came. Time after time Durniere, new master of the lions, made his bow—but not to the audience. Instead, his eyes were ever looking into those of the little, black-gowned figure of a woman who sat on a lower tier of seats, her chin in her hands, her gaze fastened upon the figure in the lion's den. Formation after formation, while Prince, the "bad lion" of the group, snarled and sulked; the leaps as, his revolver cracking, Durniere sent the lions one by one over the hurdles and back again. It was over. A moment later the seat where the little woman had been was vacant. Shoestring Charley, peering through the smoke of his cigarette, nodded his head slowly, complacently. La Chiquita Marie was waiting at the flags—waiting for Durniere.

ANOTHER day, as the audience roared its approval and the tiny hands of La Chiquita Marie gave a praise that was worth more than all the rest to the man within the lions' den. Another—and as old Mamma, of the elephant herd, dragged at the cage of Prince, as the preparations for the night show were made, Shoestring Charley stopped at the space where the cage had been, and looked down into the eyes of La Chiquita Marie.

"Lookin' 'em over before that guy starts on 'em?" he asked jokingly. La Chiquita Marie smiled quizzically.

"Dees Prince, he ees a bad lion," she answered.

"Bad?" asked Shoestring whole-heartedly. "Say, he's rotten. He's going to bite that guy's head off, too, if he keeps on getting reckless. That Prince aint no—"

"Who? Durniere?" La Chiquita Marie had asked the question sharply. "You t'ink Prince get him? Not so much as t'at!" She snapped her fingers

scornfully. "He's too good a trainaire!"

"Too what-a-a-t?" Shoestring bent forward. "Say that over again, will you?"

La Chiquita Marie smiled again.

"I say he's too good a trainaire!"

She walked on, and Shoestring looked after her, his cigarette hanging dolefully from his lower lip, his hands jammed deep into his pockets.

"I'll be a son of a gun!" he murmured. "Oh, it can't be. Can you beat it? Day before yesterday she wants to cut his heart out—now she sticks up for him. One thing's sure," he added, as he started away: "you never can tell which way they're going to flop. And if she's flopped for him—"

He stopped. He had felt a slight impact against his shoe and something had tinkled away into the strewn straw of the ground at the cage-line. Shoestring bent over curiously and a second later picked up a small bottle. From the distance there came the sound of the equestrian director's whistle, as he sounded the property-men into the ring. Idly, Shoestring raised the mouth of the bottle to his lips to imitate the sound. Then his mind changed. The bottle went higher—to his nostrils—and he sniffed industriously. Finally he turned and handed the little vial to a near-by hostler.

"What's been in there?" he asked curiously. "Blamed if I can name it."

The hostler sniffed and then grinned.

"Me either. I've shot enough of it, but I never heard no name for it except 'dope.'"

"Dope?"

"Yeh, around the race-track—for horses. At least, it's got some of the same stuff in it. Smells a little different, though; it aint quite the exact stuff, but—"

"Dope?" Shoestring regarded the bottle quizzically, then threw it away. "Wonder what it's doing here?" Then, the matter dismissed with the disappearance of the bottle, he wandered on.

AROUND the hippodrome track the entry blared and boomed, while La Chiquita Marie hurried from the flags and took her place by the arena. Shoe-

string, standing in the connection, noticed that she glanced quickly toward the cage of Prince—and involuntarily his eyes went there also. A prod-man, his steel poking through the bars, was jamming at the roaring Prince within and swearing. Then, as the equestrian director's whistle sounded again, he leaped to the drawbars and pulled them for the entrance of the other lions into the runway that led to where Durniere waited within the big circle of steel. A quick movement or two, a cracking of the whip, a shout, and Durniere had sent the amiable members of the lion group to their pedestals, an action always necessary for the entrance of Prince. For Prince was an "inbred," that most hated and feared of animal actors. Low-browed, wide-spaced between the eyes, snarling, jealous, hateful, he represented to the animal kingdom what a thug represents to society. The claws of Prince were ever outstretched; the lips were ever bared from his yellow teeth; his eyes ever blazed; and to-night—

Durniere cracked his whip and made his perfunctory bow. The first applause of anticipation came from the tight-packed tiers of seats above him. He looked into the eyes of La Chiquita Marie. They were smiling and wonderful. High in the air he waved his whip; he half turned.

"All right for Prince!"

The drawbar on the lion's cage clanked as the door to the runway swung open. A shout or two came from the animal men, and the grinding screech of steel against steel as the prod-rods went between the bars of the cage. Prince had crouched in his corner, rumbling his anger and his dislike for the blazing lights of the arena. The prods caught him beneath the breast, and the electric current from their storage batteries sent a shiver through his great, tawny body. A tremendous paw shot forth wildly; he waved his sullen, vicious head and shook the scraggly growths of his ragged mane. He roared again—louder. In the arena, his heavy bull-whip ready for action, waited Durniere, impatiently hissing orders in an undertone.

In the connection, Shoestring Charley,

his cigarette glowing, looked at the snarling lion and then suddenly shifted his gaze to the face of the little woman on the lower tier of seats. Far forward she sat, her eyes blazing with a strange, almost phosphorescent fire. Her hands were clasped before her. Her usually pretty, childish lips were livid now—and her eyes were directed straight on Durniere of the steel arena.

Again, a roar. A shout from the arena. Answering shouts from the men at the cage—a little murmur which traveled through the tiers of seats as the audience hunched forward. A plunge—then a retraction, as Prince bounded out of his corner, then back again. At last, prodded through the runway, his great paws reaching aimlessly for the rods as he snarled his way along, he came forward. He faced Durniere at the doorway. A slow, defiant leap, and he half crouched in the blaze of lights—and waited. Durniere stepped slowly forward, his heavy whip trailing behind him. About the arena the prod-men had gathered, their rods already half poked through the heavy bars—at the gate stood "Slag" Fredericks, his hands ready to loosen the strappings at a second's notice. It was the usual precaution for the sending of Prince to his pedestal. And to-night there was something in the glazed yet glittering eyes of the lion which held every man close to the bars.

The eyes of Durniere sought those of La Chiquita Marie beyond the arena. With electric rapidity her manner changed; she smiled and hunched her shoulders. A laugh from the trainer. His heavy whip swung in the air and cracked.

"Up, Prince!" he shouted. "Up!"

A rosin-rough snarl. The long claws of the inbred came forth; his gigantic paw swung in the air; it tangled in the whip and tore at it. High above, from the tense, white-faced audience, a great gasp came—then quieted. The whip had freed; Durniere again was cracking it through the air; Durniere again was shouting.

A sudden lunge—Prince had swayed to one side of the arena, to feel the electric touch of a prod, then to swerve to the center again. For just an instant

he padded there, his paws raising jerkily; then suddenly he swung and whirled about the edge of the long line of bars. The prods again. He turned and clawed at them, swiping his great paws first to one side, then to the other. His glaring eyes sought Durniere; his rumbling roar thundered forth again; the dripping slime of his yellow teeth gleamed in the light of the chandeliers. He reared, then huddled; he padded back and forth; a bound, and he was on his pedestal, only to lunge again to the ground. Doubling, turning, twisting, his long tail lashing against the bars, he veered here and there before the leaping, shouting trainer; dodging the blows of the whip, he crouched and reared and plunged.

His eyes were more glazed than ever now. His great jaws hung open, like those of a panting dog. Again he swerved; then the great muscles stood forth in huge pads as he settled into a crouch. A shout—the cracking of a revolver, as Slag Fredericks sent the flaring contents of a blank cartridge toward him, and he weakened, again to whirl and plunge against the bars and the prod-rods. From above, the breathing of the tight-packed audience swept through the tremendous tent like some horrible moan. A laugh came from the lips of Durniere as in an instantaneous glimpse he caught the sight of the tense faces above him. Once again he lashed his whip; once again the scraggly maned head of the inbred swung sharply from side to side; once again the heavy, rounded muscles padded into place—

Shoestring, in the connection, suddenly stiffened, and his fingers went wide into the air. For just an instant his face went blank as the realization swept over him. Then he leaped forward, shouting as he ran, his arms outstretched, his form speeding.

"Open that door! Open that door! That lion's—"

The cracking of a revolver as a line of red went forth from the hand of Slag Fredericks, a horrible, half-moaning cry that traveled from tier to tier of the packed seats; a jumble of shouts—a choking, inarticulate scream from within the great arena; a maze of forms,

a flash of gilt and tinsel and blue, as a tawny mass of muscle and dripping jaws came hurtling through the air upon it. Men ran here and there, aimlessly; they shouted, they tore at the fastenings of the gate—

Again and again the revolver of Slag Fredericks spat forth. The clanking sound of the prod-rods grated a banging chorus as the animal-men bunched themselves against the bars and poked and jammed at the heaving figure of the lion within.

High in the audience, men were shouting and cursing as they sent the frightened spectators back to their seats and held them there to prevent the crush of the panic that threatened. A crunching, rending sound from within the arena; the leaping forms of the other lions as, masterless, they plunged here and there about the great cage.

From somewhere hurrying property-men ran forth, a great piece of side-wall stretched between them, to shut off the view from the audience. Again a shot from the revolver of Slag Fredericks, the clanking of the drawbars as one by one, the lions, even blood-smeared Prince, were shunted back into their cages.

The blaring of the band began again. The show went on, while out through the connection to the menagerie-tent, four hurrying property-men stumbled with a huddled something between them, a huddled something wrapped in canvas—and the canvas dripping blood.

Shoestring, emerging from the midst of the work, shook his head as he looked after the hurrying property-men. There had been no call for physicians—Durniere was past their aid. Slowly Shoestring's eyes traveled the vista of the audience, gradually settling from its fright and its panic. Then his gaze stopped. A seat on the lower tier was vacant, while far in the connection the little form of a woman in black wandered wearily away. Shoestring whirled. A moment later he was by her side.

"Well?" he asked shortly. His hands were clawing for his makin's. She

turned, and her face was old; yet there was something in the expression of the eyes which sent a thrill through the wiry little body of Shoestring Charley.

"We shall not need z' police—huh?"

A queer, hardened little smile came to the lips. Then the eyes became vacant and stared into the distance. "He face Trelini now!"

Half wavering, she turned and wandered on, while Shoestring stood and watched. Far into the menagerie-tent she wandered, and then suddenly she stopped and with a quick little glance about her dropped something into the straw and pressed it deeper with her foot. On again she went, while Shoestring waited—then sped forward. A moment more; then he too bent forward, pulled something from beneath the straw. He gazed at it and turned it in the cup of his hand—the tubular metal and glass of a heavy, stubby hypodermic syringe.

AN approaching hostler—and Shoestring's hands went to his side. Slowly he lifted the side-wall and went into the darkness of the open—then paused at the sound of near-by voices:

"Here's that there two bits, Fuzzy. I'd 'a' got it sooner, only—"

"Oh, thassall right, Soapy. Say, that shore helps out. Gosh, two bits gets as big's a mountain when you're warpin' in, don't it?"

"Yep. That squares us, don't it, Fuzzy?"

"Shorest thing you know, Soapy. All debts squared. She's a-warpin' in."

They faded in the darkness, and Shoestring Charley Grenolds of the World Famous looked after them, his eyes narrowed, his cigarettes for once forgotten.

"All debts squared," he murmured in repetition.

A quick motion—his arm shot back, and then went forward. A slight swishing sound, as a tubelike bit of glass and metal traveled far into the distance.

"All debts squared!" came his voice. "All debts squared—she's a-warpin' in!"

JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD writes, in this novel of the North, of a new kind of hero, a monstrous grizzly bear.

Thor is overlord of a stretch of the high Canadian Rockies. One lovely June day he comes, like some feudal lord of old, down into the valleys to plunder. Eating is his sole business of the summer—so that he may lay up a store of fat to last through his long winter sleep. He digs up his favorite tidbit, a gopher, for his heavy course and steals a heap of ground-nuts from a rock rabbit for his dessert. He is happy and content. Other bears roam his mountains, as do big-horn sheep and lesser animals. He lives and lets live. He fights only when his rights are disputed and kills only when he wants food. His philosophy of life could be summed up in three words, "Let me alone."

Then suddenly out of the south comes destruction to the harmony of his days.

JIM LANGDON, a writer, is exploring. He has with him Bruce Otto, a mountaineer, and a pack-train with a camping outfit. They enter one of Thor's valleys and take a look around with their field-glasses.

"I see three caribou up the valley," says Otto.

"I see a big-horn looking down from the peak of that first mountain to the right," comments Langdon.

"And I see a grizzly as big as a house just beyond the ravine over there," says Otto again.

Langdon turns his glass to follow Otto's. "Gee, he's the biggest grizzly in the Rockies," he cries. "We'll camp here till we get him if it takes all summer."

Langdon climbs the slope till suddenly a monster bulk of head and shoulder looms over him. So Thor sees his first man. He is not afraid and he is not angry. His great lungs fill with the hot smell of man. He turns away in disgust, and speeds with a ball-like motion. Langdon shoots. Otto joins him. All at once there is a hot pain in Thor's shoulder. He turns and roars defiance. Another whiplash of fire sears his gigantic back, and he breaks for a divide over which he plunges out of rifle-shot.

The great beast's hurts are more pain-



The Previous Chapters of "The Grizzly"

ful than serious. The bone has not been touched. So he makes for a ravine and his doctor, a clay wallow. He spends half the night in the clay bath and then toils up the ravine.

Langdon is the more determined to get Thor, when they come to his tracks in the mud. He measures the tracks with a pocket tape.

"Fifteen and a quarter inches," he cries exultantly. "The biggest grizzly ever killed in British Columbia measured fourteen and a half, and this one beats him."

The next day Thor comes on a stray cub black bear. Muskwa, the cub, licks Thor's wounds, and so the great beast allows the baby to follow him.

Thor eats wild berries that prove an

emetic and feels better. Hunger now assails him and he wants heavy food. So Muskwa gets his first lesson in big-game killing. Thor stalks a young caribou, disembowels it with one stroke of his sharp-toed foot, and the two feast till Muskwa is as wide as he is long. Then they sleep while Langdon and Bruce seek them.

When Thor and Muskwa go back to breakfast on their caribou they find a black bear there before them. Thor orders him away. But the black is defiant. Thor gives battle; after a fierce struggle, he gets a death-grip on the black's nose, and the fight is ended.

"My God!" cries Langdon, who is watching through a glass two miles away.

"Come on," calls Bruce. "If we hustle we can get him." But by the time they arrive on the bloody, hide-strewn battlefield, Thor is leading Muskwa over a steep sheep-trail into the next valley.

The next few days develop Muskwa's world knowledge fast. Twice to his amazement he sees Thor meet bears and give no fight. The first meeting of that kind shows the bear regard for old age. Thor has just thrown several trout up on the bank for a feast when a toothless old bear happens along and is allowed to eat his fill undisturbed. The second meeting is with a female bear, Thor's yearly mate. And then an experience, new and terrible to both, comes with the advent of Langdon's Airedales. Muskwa crawls into a crevice of rock while Thor gives fight. He mangles several of the pack and uses the rest as a defense from the guns till he draws the doomed thoroughbreds over a divide and out of gun-shot with him.



GRIZZLY

A Novel of the Great Outdoors

By James Oliver Curwood

Author of "Kazan," "The Hunted Woman," etc.

CHAPTER XIV

ILLUSTRATED BY
FRANK B. HOFFMAN

IN his hiding place Muskwa heard the last sounds of the battle on the ledge. The crevice was a V-shaped crack in the rock, and he had wedged himself as far back in this as he could. He saw Thor pass the opening of his refuge after he had killed the fourth dog; he heard the *click, click, click* of his claws as he retreated up the trail; and at last he knew that the grizzly was gone, and that the enemy had followed him.

Still he was afraid to come out. These strange pursuers that had come up out of the valley had filled him with a deadly terror. Pipoonaskoos had not

made him afraid. Even the big black bear that Thor killed had not terrified him as these red-lipped, white-fanged strangers had frightened him. So he remained in his crevice, crowded as far back as he could get, like a wad shoved in a gun-barrel.

He could still hear the tonguing of the dogs when other and nearer sounds alarmed him. Langdon and Bruce came rushing around the bulge in the mountain wall, and at sight of the dead dogs they stopped. Langdon cried out in horror.

He was not more than twenty feet from Muskwa. For the first time the cub heard human voices; for the first time the sweaty odor of men filled his

nostrils, and he scarcely breathed in his new fear. Then one of the hunters stood directly in front of the crack in which he was hidden, and he saw his first man. A moment later the men were gone again.

LATER Muskwa heard the shots. After that the barking of the dogs grew more and more distant until finally he could not hear them at all. It was about three o'clock—the siesta hour in the mountains—and it was very quiet.

For a long time Muskwa did not move. He listened. And he heard nothing. Another fear was growing in him now—the fear of losing Thor. With every breath he drew he was hoping that Thor would return. For an hour he remained wedged in the rock. Then he heard a *cheep, cheep, cheep* and a tiny striped rock-rabbit came out on the ledge where Muskwa could see him and began cautiously investigating one of the slain Airedales.

This gave Muskwa courage. He pricked up his ears a bit. He whimpered softly, as if beseeching recognition and friendship of the one tiny creature that was near him in this dreadful hour of loneliness and fear.

Inch by inch he crawled out of his hiding-place. At last his little round, furry head was out, and he looked about him. The trail was clear, and he advanced toward the rock-rabbit. With a shrill chatter the striped mite darted for its own stronghold, and Muskwa was alone again.

For a few moments he stood undecided, sniffing the air that was heavy with the scent of blood, of man and of Thor; then he turned up the mountain.

He knew Thor had gone in that direction, and if little Muskwa possessed a mind and a soul they were filled with but one desire now—to overtake his big friend and protector. Even fear of dogs and men, unknown quantities in his life until to-day, was now overshadowed by the fear that he had lost Thor.

He did not need eyes to follow the trail. It was warm under his nose, and he started in the zig-zag ascent of the mountain as fast as he could go. There

were places where progress was difficult for his short legs, but he kept on valiantly and hopefully, encouraged by Thor's fresh scent.

It took him a good hour to reach the beginning of the naked shale that reached up to the belt of snow and the sky-line, and it was four o'clock when he started in the zigzag ascent of the yards between him and the mountain-top. Up there he believed he would find Thor. But he was afraid, and he continued to whimper softly to himself as he dug his little claws bravely into the shale.

MUSKWA did not look up to the crest of the peak again after he had started. To have done that it would have been necessary for him to stop and turn sidewise, for the ascent was steep. And so, when Muskwa was half-way to the top, it happened that he did not see Langdon and Bruce as they came over the sky-line; and he could not smell them, for the wind was blowing up instead of down. Oblivious of their presence he came to the snow-belt. Joyously he smelled of Thor's huge footprints, and followed them. And above him Bruce and Langdon waited, crouched low, their guns on the ground, and each with his thick flannel shirt stripped off and held ready in his hands. When Muskwa was less than twenty yards from them they came tearing down upon him like an avalanche.

Not until Bruce was upon him did Muskwa recover himself sufficiently to move. He saw and realized danger in the last fifth of a second, and as Bruce flung himself forward, his shirt outspread like a net, Muskwa darted to one side. Sprawling on his face, Bruce gathered up a shirtful of snow and clutched it to his breast, believing for a moment that he had the cub, and at the same instant Langdon made a drive that entangled him with his friend's long legs and sent him turning somersaults down the snow-slide.

Muskwa bolted down the mountain as fast as his short legs could carry him. In another second Bruce was after him, and Langdon joined in ten feet behind.

Suddenly Muskwa made a sharp turn,



Muskwa went up the tree so quickly that Langdon was astonished. The cub snarled and spat at the man.

and the momentum with which Bruce was coming carried him thirty or forty feet below him, where the lanky mountaineer stopped himself only by doubling up like a jack-knife and digging toes, hands, elbows and even his shoulders in the soft shale.

Langdon had switched, and was hot after Muskwa. He flung himself face downward, shirt outspread, just as the cub made another turn, and when he rose to his feet his face was scratched and he spat half a handful of dirt and shale out of his mouth.

Unfortunately for Muskwa, his second turn brought him straight down to Bruce, and before he could turn again he was enveloped in sudden darkness and suffocation, and over him there rang out a fiendish and triumphant yell.

"I got 'im!" shouted Bruce.

INSIDE the shirt Muskwa scratched and bit and snarled, and Bruce was having his hands full when Langdon ran down with the second shirt. Very shortly Muskwa was trussed up like a papoose. His legs and his body were swathed so tightly that he could not move them. His head was not covered. It was the only part of him that showed, and the only part of him that he could move, and it looked so round and frightened and funny that for a minute or two Langdon and Bruce forgot their disappointments and losses of the day and laughed.

Then Langdon sat down on one side of Muskwa, and Bruce on the other, and they filled and lighted their pipes. Muskwa could not even kick an objection.

"A couple of husky hunters we are," said Langdon then. "Come out for a grizzly and end up with that!"

He looked at the cub. Muskwa was eyeing him so earnestly that Langdon sat in mute wonder for a moment, and then slowly stretched out a hand.

"Cubby, cubby, nice cubby," he cajoled softly.

Muskwa's tiny ears were perked forward. His bright eyes were like glass. Bruce, unobserved by Langdon, was grinning expectantly.

"Cubby wont bite — no — no — nice little cubby — we wont hurt cubby!"

The next instant a wild yell startled the mountain-tops as Muskwa's needle-like teeth sank into one of Langdon's fingers. Bruce's howls of joy would have frightened game a mile away.

"You little devil!" gasped Langdon, and then, as he sucked his wounded finger, he laughed with Bruce. "He's a sport—a dead game sport," he added. "We'll call him Spitfire, Bruce. By George, I've wanted a cub like that ever since I first came into the mountains. I'm going to take him home with me! Aint he a funny-looking little cuss?"

Muskwa shifted his head, the only part of him that was not as stiffly immovable as a mummy, and scrutinized Bruce. Langdon rose to his feet and looked back to the sky-line. His face was set and hard.

"Four dogs!" he said, as if speaking to himself. "Three down below — and one up there!" He was silent for a moment, and then said: "I can't understand it, Bruce. They've cornered fifty bears for us, and until to-day we've never lost a dog."

Bruce was looping a buckskin thong about Muskwa's middle, making of it a sort of handle by which he could carry the cub as he would have conveyed a pail of water or a slab of bacon. He

stood up, and Muskwa dangled at the end of his string.

"We've run up against a killer," he said. "An' a meat-killin' grizzly is the worst animal on the face of the earth when it comes to a fight or a hunt. The dogs 'll never hold 'im, Jimmy, an' if it don't get dark pretty soon, there wont none of the bunch come back. They'll



quit at dark—if there's any left. The old fellow's got our wind, and you can bet he knows what knocked him down up there on the snow. He's hikin'—and hikin' fast. When we see 'im ag'in it'll be twenty miles from here."

LANGDON went up for the guns. When he returned, Bruce led the way down the mountain, carrying Muskwa by the buckskin thong. For a few moments they paused on the blood-stained ledge of rock where Thor had wreaked his vengeance upon his tormentors. Langdon bent over the dog the grizzly had decapitated.

"This is Biscuits," he said. "And we always thought she was the one coward of the bunch. The other two are Jane and Tober; old Fritz is up on the summit. Three of the best dogs we had, Bruce!"

Bruce was looking over the ledge. He pointed downward.

"There's another—pitched clean off the face o' the mount'in!" he gasped. "Jimmy, that's five!"

Langdon's fists were clenched tightly as he stared over the edge of the precipice. A choking sound came from his throat. Bruce understood its meaning. From where they stood they could see a black patch on the upturned breast of the dog a hundred feet under them. Only one of the pack was marked like that. It was Langdon's favorite. He had made her a camp pet.

"It's Dixie," he said. For the first time he felt a surge of anger sweep through him, and his face was white as he turned back to the trail. "I've got more than one reason for getting that grizzly now, Bruce," he added. "Wild horses can't tear me away from these mountains until I kill him. I'll stick until winter if I have to. I swear I'm going to kill him—if he doesn't run away."

"He wont do that," said Bruce tersely, as he once more swung down the trail with Muskwa.

UNTIL now Muskwa had been stunned into submissiveness by what must have appeared to him to be an utterly hopeless situation. He had

strained every muscle in his body to move a leg or a paw, but he was swathed as tightly as Rameses had ever been. But now, however, it slowly dawned upon him that as he dangled back and forth his face frequently brushed his enemy's leg, and he still had the use of his teeth. He watched his opportunity, and this came when Bruce took a long step down from a rock, thus allowing Muskwa's body to rest for the fraction of a second on the surface of the stone from which he was descending.

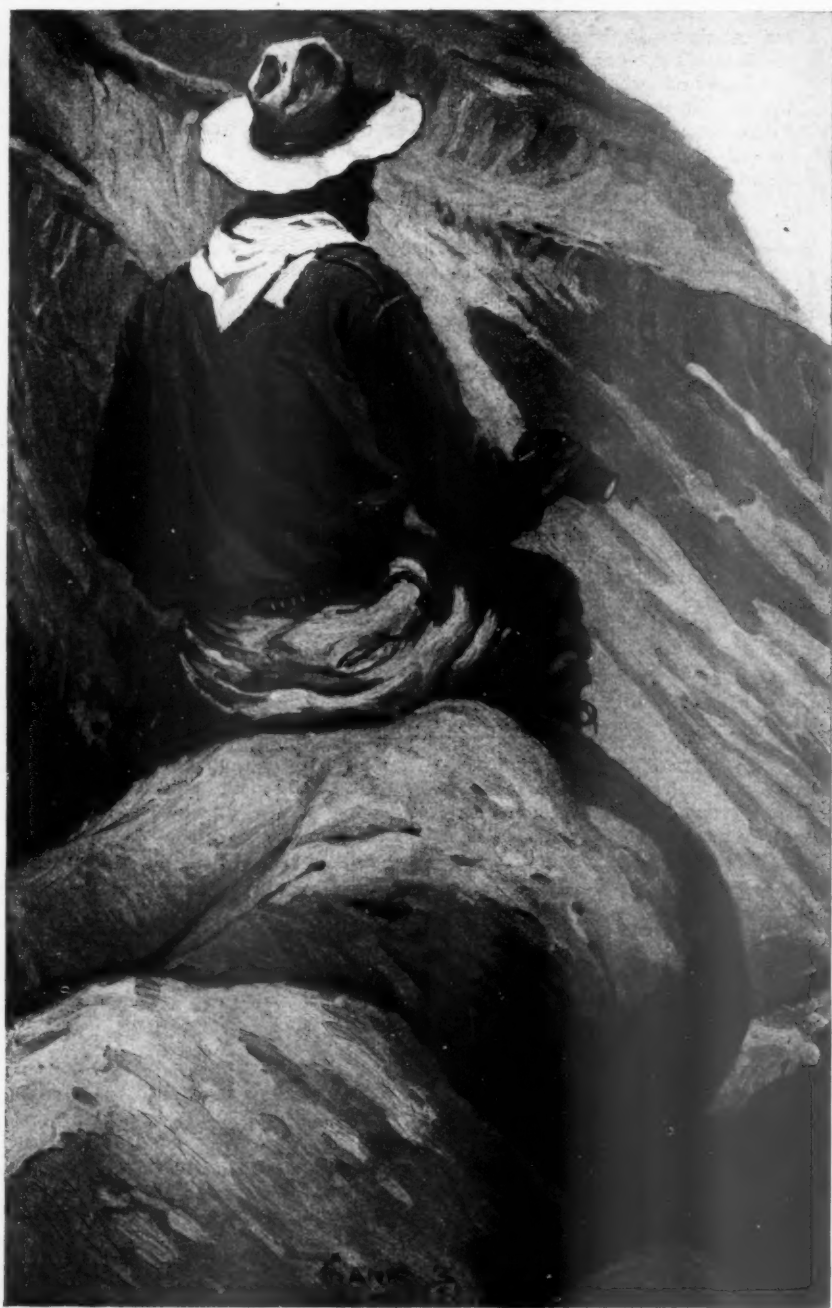
Quicker than a wink Muskwa took a bite. It was a good deep bite, and if Langdon's howl had stirred the silences a mile away, the yell which now came from Bruce beat him by at least a half. It was the wildest, most blood-curdling sound Muskwa had ever heard—even more terrible than the barking of the dogs, and it frightened him so that he released his hold at once.

Then, again, he was amazed. These queer bipeds made no effort to retaliate. The one he had bitten hopped up and down on one foot in a most unaccountable manner for a minute or so, while the other sat down on a boulder and rocked back and forth, with his hands on his stomach, and made a queer, uproarious noise with his mouth wide open. Then the other stopped his hopping and also made that queer noise.

It was anything but laughter to Muskwa. But it impinged upon him the truth of one of two things—either these grotesque-looking monsters did not dare to fight him, or they were very peaceful and had no intention of harming him. But they were more cautious thereafter, and as soon as they reached the valley they carried him between them, strung on a rifle-barrel.

It was almost dark when they approached a clump of balsams red with the glow of a fire. It was Muskwa's first fire. Also he saw his first horses—terrific-looking monsters even larger than Thor.

A third man—Metoosin, the Indian—came out to meet the hunters, and into this creature's hands Muskwa found himself transferred. He was laid on his side with the glare of the fire in his eyes, and while one of his captors held



Langdon turned slowly, and the next moment his heart seemed to stop its beating; his blood seemed to grow cold moving slowly from side to side as he regarded his trapped



and lifeless in his veins. Barring the ledge not more than fifteen feet from him, his great jaws agape, his head enemy, stood Thor, the King of the Mountains.

him by both ears, and so tightly that it hurt, another fastened a hobble-strap around his neck for a collar. A heavy halter-rope was then tied to the ring on this strap, and the end of the rope was fastened to a tree.

During these operations Muskwa snarled and snapped as much as he could. In another half-minute he was free of the shirts, and as he staggered on four wobbly legs, from which all power of flight had temporarily gone, he bared his fangs and snarled as fiercely as he could.

To his further amazement this had no effect upon his strange company at all, except that the three of them—even the Indian—opened their mouths and joined in that loud and incomprehensible din, to which one of them had given voice when he sank his teeth into his captor's leg on the mountain-side. It was all tremendously puzzling to Muskwa.

CHAPTER XV

GREATLY to Muskwa's relief the three men soon turned away from him and began to busy themselves about the fire. This gave him a chance to escape, and he pulled and tugged at the end of the rope until he nearly choked himself to death. Finally he gave up in despair, and crumpling himself up against the foot of the balsam he began to watch the camp.

He was not more than thirty feet from the fire. Bruce was washing his hands in a canvas basin. Langdon was mopping his face with a towel. Close to the fire Metoosin was kneeling, and from the big black skittle he was holding over the coals came the hissing and sputtering of fat caribou steaks, and about the pleasantest smell that had ever come Muskwa's way. The air all about him was heavy with the aroma of good things.



When Langdon had finished drying his face he opened a can of something. It was sweetened condensed milk. He poured the white fluid into a basin, and came with it toward Muskwa. The cub had unsuccessfully attempted flight on the ground until his neck was sore; now he climbed the tree. He went up so quickly that Langdon was astonished, and Muskwa snarled and spat at the man as the basin of milk was placed where he would almost fall into it when he came down.

Muskwa remained at the end of his rope up the tree, and for a long time the hunters paid no more attention to him. He could see them eating and he could hear them talking as they planned a new campaign against Thor.

"We've got to trick him after what happened to-day," declared Bruce. "No more tracking 'im after this, Jimmy. We can track until doomsday and he'll always know where we are." He paused for a moment and listened. "Funny the dogs don't come," he said. "I wonder—"

He looked at Langdon.

"Impossible!" exclaimed the latter, as he read the significance of his companion's look. "Bruce, you don't mean to say that bear might kill them all!"

"I've hunted a good many grizzlies," replied the mountaineer quietly, "but I aint never hunted a trickier one than this. Jimmy, he trapped them dogs on the ledge, an' he tricked the dog he killed up on the peak. He's liable to get 'em all into a corner, and if that happens—"

He shrugged his shoulders suggestively.

Again Langdon listened.

"If there were any alive at dark they should be here pretty soon," he said. "I'm sorry, now—sorry we didn't leave the dogs at home."

Continued on page 186 of this issue.

A Story of
 "THE RIVER
 OF ROMANCE
 AND FOLLY"

The Major's Drama

By Opie Read

Author of "The Jucklins," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY RAE VAN BUREN

"I F a painting could catch the colors of an early summer's dawn on the lower Mississippi it would flush a whole Louvre of art," Major Pewitt remarked to his young friend William Hawkins as they sat on the upper deck of the steamer *White Swan*, gazing into the countenance of an infant day. He paused, and Hawkins waited for him to resume his silken thread, but the young fellow was not surprised when the Major switched abruptly and caught up the hempen line of his own peculiar philosophy:

"Billy, if we don't rob the robbers in New Orleans," was the Major's next remark, "I'll eat a Yankee knapsack and pick my teeth with a bayonet."

"You were talking about the sunrise."

"True enough. But you can easily dismiss a sunrise. Nature takes care of herself. But there are some things that don't, and one of them is human weakness. Shall I take stock of your recent weakness, Willie? Thank you, my son—assuming that you grant me that privilege. I shall speak also of your evidences of strength. On the steamer *Black Hawk*, coming down to Natchez, you were heroic. Disguised as a highwayman, you robbed a poker game, and we divided the money, a glorious achievement. Weren't you tickled over it?"

"You saw me laughing over it, didn't you? But why mention it again?"

"Ah, why indeed? Because of your weakness. Oh, I am going to be merciful in my stock-taking."

"Go ahead."

"I thank you, Billy. You are generous, and in generosity lies, for the most part, a certain weakness. We are invited into a household of refined and

exclusive society, into the home of Colonel Pemberton. Then you begin to itch because he was in the game you so manfully, and by gad, so justly, robbed. Wisdom told you he had bet on a sure hand and had taken your money. Then you bet on a mask and a revolver, not always sure things, and took all the money on the table, a heroic achieve—"

"Oh, I know all that, Major."

"Wait a moment. The thing you know, unless you have arrived at the philosophy of it, is only a half-digested truth. . . . That ought to have remained the status, but it didn't, for when I was not present, and when my counsel had not been asked, you confessed yourself the robber and gave back to the Colonel eleven hundred dollars, a very sad thing. Why, sir, do you know what can be done with eleven hundred dollars? But let us not go off into speculation. Oh, I consider the fact that he had revealed to you a family secret, that the little black-eyed kitten Cisne was not his daughter, but that having killed her father in a duel he had adopted her. Charming romance, neat as a stage trick. And why did he tell you? This bleeds me, but why did he tell you? Because he saw that you had fallen in love with the girl."

"He couldn't have seen anything of the sort, sir," Hawkins protested. "And you too pretended to have made that wonderful discovery. It was a presumption on the Colonel's part, and on yours too, sir. Love her! I don't believe I should recognize her this minute if—"

"William, common sense is a rare thing, but let us make an effort to get at it. You may not acknowledge to yourself that you are in love. Love is a most

insidious poison. It is a consumption not only of the heart but of the lungs and—and the damn' liver, sir. It—"

"To the devil with love!" Hawkins roared.

"Spoken like a man, William, and I trust you'll hold to that opinion of it. Yes sir. But at any rate you confessed the robbery and gave him eleven hundred dollars. Then what? Did he gather you into his embrace and say: 'How noble! How like a Greek god! I forgive you.' Did he? Did he take out a red bandanna, wipe his eyes and say, 'She is the light of our house, but marry her'? Did he? My understanding is that he didn't. He led you out through the gate and told you good-by. Morally that would have hamstringed a shepherd patriarch, but not you, William, for then came on your part a greater weakness. You refused to rob the bank of a thief that had robbed your father. Hawkins, I am afraid that I shall never outlive that sorrow. . . . Still, you could yet almost atone."

"How?"

"By achievement in the immediate future. I don't ask you to repent. The repent enters into the bankrupt court of the emotions. I have a scheme, and I ask you to help me carry it through."

"What is it?"

"I'll lay it before you in ripened time. And when it has been accomplished, the birds will sing again."

"And then you'll be convinced that I'm not in love with that—that girl back yonder?"

"William, I shall then believe you are the really great man nature intended you to be. . . . Glorious morning."

He leaned against Hawkins, looking out upon the water ruffling in the cool breeze.

HAWKINS was on tiptoe for his first peep at New Orleans, the city of romance, far away in the russet haze lying low. The river appeared to have been built up, a slow and yellow flood between two great levees, the endless cane-fields on each side an emerald ocean. Here indeed the sands of time were eternally shifting—a bar forming in a night; a current where, on an island,

a crane had stalked up and down the day before. Far off a steamboat gargled its melodious throat, and near by fluttered a tug, a great duck, flapping in the water. Every sound was music, every sight a thrill.

"Billy, I think we'll buy plantations over there," said the Major, waving his hand toward the left bank. "Within a day or so we'll get a rig and drive out to make closer observation. A man has done something when he has acquired a sugar plantation, don't you think?"

Hawkins acknowledged that a man surely had, but ventured upon a speculation as to the certainty of thus establishing themselves; and no look of a sage bent upon the sleeping inmate of a baby carriage could have been as full of philosophic pity as the Major's eyes, slowly turning upon his friend.

"By gad, Bill, you—listen to me: Nature elects certain men to live by their wits. It is an endowment. They are the modern soldiers of fortune; and Nature gives to them her brightest smiles because she hates regularity. In proof of this we have the changing seasons, rain, snow, sunshine. What the business man calls honesty is a sort of moral stagnation. It is a moral lie. Business hasn't the courage to cut a throat; it smothers with a pillow. With pillows for weapons it would take us a lifetime to smother out enough money to buy one of those plantations. I am liberal enough to acknowledge that fact. But with the sword of wit—let me tell you what we'll do: we'll soon have enough to buy a big steamboat, and then we'll start a gambling-house right. We'll ply from Memphis to New Orleans, and when we weary of so active a life—sugar plantations. . . . Let's see. What shall we call our boat, Billy?"

"I don't know. However, I should think it easy enough to get a name after we've got a boat."

"Now, Bill, you may think that's logic, but it isn't. It's a shift, and in all shifts there is weakness. I never saw a young fellow try harder to be a crank; and it all comes from that smear of molasses back yonder in Natchez."

"I didn't see any smear of molasses."

"Oh, you didn't, eh? You didn't drop

into it and pull off one leg getting out, like a fly?"

Hawkins laughed, and the Major seized hold of him. "Now you are old Bill, sure enough. You may lag for a time, but you pick up. Do you know what we'll name that boat? The *Bumblebee*. Think of it! Was there ever in all river navigation a better name? And was there ever anything more original? Let it buzz slowly through your head. Buzzes of its own accord, doesn't it? Oh, we've got it, and you shall be the captain. Captain William Hawkins. Get that, too. And I'll be the courteous old gentleman who takes care of the passengers. The Government, it is true, will insist on us having officers that understand the practical running of a boat, but you'll be the real captain. The acting captain will come up to you in the presence of the ladies and say: 'Real Captain, shall I do so and so?' And then you will answer, the ladies standing about you: 'Acting Captain, yes, do it.' Ah, there she huddles," broke off the Major, waving his hand.

And Hawkins saw the city, the cross on a cathedral, gleaming in the sun. Here was the great wharf so thick-set with boats that the *White Swan* had to nose her way into a niche left open; and how mighty a chorus of deep-toned bells, startling gongs, sharp whistles and the shuddering melody of steam horns! What a sea of industry on the endless wharf, thousands of barrels and hogsheads, great bulwarks of bags piled house-high, myriads of drays like ducks waddling toward the water, carriages flashing in the sun, laughter, shouts of welcome! Over the smooth stones there was a slippery scramble for gold, but in the midst of it all a brass band was playing, *Midas* and *Apollo* mingling!

Ashore the young man strode, head above those foreign hustlers, and yet how small he felt. But the Major! In his Confederate gray he marched, swelling with the pleasure he always felt when admiring looks were cast upon him. Boys followed him, not with the jeers of the infant outlaw of the street, but in mute tribute to his greatness; and an old woman with a basket dropped him a courtesy and presented him with a

banana. He accepted it as if it were a decoration offered by a queen, and dropped a dollar into her basket.

"Billy," said the Major, "through these streets have marched heroes, but we'll get a cab." And when they were rolling over the stones toward the St. Charles Hotel, he slapped his hand down hard on Hawkins' knee and swore that they were going to the most famous hostelry in the world. "I am forced to admit, sir, that it is not so old as some of them, but what of that when we reflect that it is the indigenous soil of the mint julep, by gad! Why, sir, in its barroom more than a thousand duels have been arranged; and it was there that I slapped the jaws of a general of the Peruvian army. With a bow, he said that I should hear from him. I did."

"Met him?" said Hawkins.

"Billy, he said that I was to hear from him, and I did the next day—heard that he had taken boat for St. Louis."

TO feel that this pillared and porticoed temple was his home enlivened the young fellow with so keen a sense of delight that he would have lingered at the portals, gazing about him, but the Major gently took him by the arm.

"Come, Billy," he said. "It will be time enough to dream after we have registered."

Here was the lobby that Hawkins had heard his father talk so much about, marble-floored, where society came to promenade; and even now in the forenoon there was enacted a continuous ceremony of politeness, the bowing of men, the graces dropped by women; and it seemed that no matter how much of a rustic a fellow might have been at home, he reached back somewhere among his ancestors and gathered unto himself a sort of gentility in this atmosphere.

The friends were given two enormous rooms opening into each other, and thus royally quartered they sat down in state.

"Billiam, I have a glorious scheme blooming in my mind, and soon the fruit will be yellow with ripeness. Don't ask me to pluck it green."

"I wont; but I should like to know as to what sort of tree it is growing on."

"Your curiosity is but natural, Wil-

liam, but a knowledge of the tree, just at this time, might reveal the fruit, and in green fruit there is colic. Wait. Meantime I must map out for you a course of inactivity, you might say. You may go to the opera, if it's not too late in the season, the theater, to church; but for the present you must keep away from all gambling resorts."

"What! I thought we came here to gamble."

The Major arose and walked up and down, in evident relish of the young fellow's perplexity. "And so we have, William, but not as mere shufflers and drawers of cards. We are out hunting, but we are to shoot tigers rather than rabbits. It will require organization,



"And—and I had liked you so much! I said that at last I had found a friend I could be free with." Slowly she led him to the door. "But I can never forget you. I will call you my—my dream. Good-by."

and on your part careful rehearsal, for you are to be the hero of the drama. Let me see—now, you stay here, and I'll go out and begin my search for the properties of the stage."

Knowing that it was useless to ply him with questions, Hawkins suffered him to depart without further interrogation, but inwardly he resented the ruling laid down for him, and was resolved to go, like the wind, whither he listed—went out, indeed, to look for a gambling-house, but attracted by everything he saw, preferred to linger about the streets.

TWO days passed, and still the Major had not turned the light on his dramatic scheme. He loved to sip at mystery, to lick his lips over it. One evening Hawkins told him that he would dress a boar-pig in satin. They were sitting in the Major's room.

"Ha, Billy, that exorbitant figure is wrenched out of your impatience. But I give you credit for waiting as long as you have. It were a tedious job to follow a measuring-worm toward your ladylove. But even the greenest of plums get ripe. Mixed up a bit here, but we'll let that go."

He arose and walked slowly about the room. Hawkins said he was afraid the plums had begun to rot.

The Major halted, heels together, and faced about. "Not by a be-blown sight, William." He looked at his watch. "Within five minutes I leave you for a brief season. You are to sit where you are, and when I return, it shall all be made as clear as a young widow's mirror."

He moved off from Hawkins to view his perplexity from a distance, laughed, took another turn about the room, looked again at his watch, and with finger up to enjoin the obligation not to stir till his return, hastened out, gently closing the door. On a table lay some of his books, and Hawkins thought to ease away the time with them, but in his hands they were as lead and he put them down. Then he got a deck of cards and was dealing fours of a kind to an imaginary player across the table, reserving straight flushes for himself, when he

heard voices, and among them the Major's, out in the corridor. A tap on the door. Hawkins opened it, and in came the Major, followed by three fellows whom the Major introduced as Messrs. Tice, Hall and Ladd.

"William," continued the Major, "these gentlemen are your supporters in the drama. I am the stage manager."

He halted to enjoy the young fellow's mystified countenance, and so keen was his relish of it that Hawkins let him hold the picture. Hall smiled; Tice and Ladd nodded; and Hawkins felt that they had advanced further into the plot than he had been permitted to penetrate. Though not pleased with this partiality toward strangers, he waited in silence for the Major to proceed.

"These gentlemen are not strangers to me, Billy," he began, reading the clear print of his disciple's mind. "In a way, I have known them for years. But as to the play!"

He took out a bandanna handkerchief so red that it might have foretold a tragedy, and on his knees spread out every wrinkle. "Here is the stage," he said, touching the center of the flaming cloth. "It is a gambling-house. I am in this house playing faro bank, when suddenly a lieutenant and three patrolmen enter. Everyone is commanded to remain seated and quiet. Then the lieutenant says: 'Gentlemen, not a cent of your individual money shall be molested. But Mr. Manager, the authorities have received numerous complaints as to the manner in which you conduct your house. We therefore have orders to take your money and books, giving you a receipt for the same, to the Bason Street Station, where at nine o'clock to-morrow morning you may appear and answer certain charges, and show cause why your property shall not be confiscated by the city and your house closed. We are making no actual arrests, but put you on your honor to appear at court. Let us hope that there may be no disturbance and that no one will attempt to leave the house. Gentlemen, the place is surrounded.' Then the lieutenant will take charge of all money belonging to the house, give a receipt and depart. A neat little play, eh, Billiam?"

"Yes, Major," Hawkins agreed. "But how are we to bribe the lieutenant and patrolmen to act for us? Do you think it possible to get them?"

The Major smiled, gathered up the red handkerchief and with it wiped his mustache and goatee.

"Billiam, you are the lieutenant, and these are your patrolmen. Ha! rather neat, eh? I have arranged for uniforms, clubs, stars, presumably for the police force of a small town up the river. In a by-street I have got possession of a small hut, and this shall be our police headquarters. The uniforms must fit perfectly, and much dress rehearsing will be required. I have arranged with the best opera costumer in town, and your mustache and beard will be as perfect as my own, sir. Oh, such an achievement!"

Up he sprang and began to walk rapidly about the room. Then he halted and again read the clear print of his young friend's mind.

"You do not speak it, but a doubt arises. William, in the habiliments of the law, anything can be done in a gambling-house. Complete crime is bold, but half crime is timid; and the bravest man in that gambling-house will not dare to lift a finger. The fact is that complaints *have* been made against the house I have selected. Oh, it was one of the properties that I was wise enough to arrange. Our friends here have agreed to act their parts for one thousand dollars each, no matter how much we may realize from the drama. And this is, I consider, good pay for one performance. Why, old Forest and old Murdock would play for that amount, and I doubt that the elder Booth ever got that much for one performance. William, will you take the leading rôle in my drama?"

"I will."

"Billy, your hand. Oh, you are atoning. Now you look the hero that Nature struggles to proclaim you."

They shook hands all round, and the Major ordered champagne from the bar downstairs; and when the wine had been brought, they drank with enthusiasm to the success of their proposed play.

AFTER his first startle at the boldness of the Major's plot, Hawkins entered into it with the keenness of a hound's scent of a fox. Not even the robbing of the poker game on the steamer *Black Hawk* had so thrilled him; and constantly was he rewarded with the Major's praise, the dramatist never wearying of telling him how game and gallant a figure he was to cut.

After the first assembly in the Major's room, Tice, Hall and Ladd were banished by the Major from the hotel and as much as possible from all public places. Every day called them together for rehearsal. With minute nicety the Major wrote out the parts, and so clever with naturalness was the dialogue that one might have wondered why he had not added dramatic authorship to his other accomplishments. They could not rehearse on the actual stage of projected achievement, the floor of the gambling-house, but the Major provided a perfect diagram of it, with layouts, tables and iron safe all noted. Having gone into it with such heartiness, Hawkins was now eager for the real performance, but the Major held up a cautioning finger.

"William, this is sugar-mule season."

"I don't know what that has to do with it, and I don't know what a sugar-mule is, anyway."

"Presumably not, Billy. A sugar-mule is a big specimen of that hybrid, designed for the sugar plantations; and at this time of the year large droves are due from farther north. When they have been sold in the market here, what do the drovers do? Go to church? If so, my information is at fault. But how do they disport themselves? They go to the gambling-houses, Billy. Are you enlightened?"

Hawkins admitted that he was, musing the while in admiration: "What a politician you would have been."

The lieutenant's uniform was first donned, and the facial make-up first set to countenance in the Major's room; and gazing into the mirror, Hawkins felt that not even the penetrative eye of Cisne Pemberton could pierce the armor of his disguise. The Major saluted him.

"Lieutenant Watkins, I am pleased to meet you, sir."

Suddenly Hawkins felt an apprehension, the alarm of caution. "Major, you have engaged these men for one thousand dollars apiece, but suppose we make a big haul: Will they be contented? Wont they hang a threat over us and constantly demand more?"

"Willie, your alarm is but natural. Ordinarily that would be the case, but these gentlemen will keep quiet. In fact, they will leave town immediately after the performance. I have found out that they are wanted in Vicksburg, and of all the penitentiaries in America, that of Mississippi is perhaps the most uninviting. No, after the play, Tice, Hall and Ladd will bid us good-by. Well, you'd better take off your regimentals and for a time retire to private life."

He went out, gayly tapping the door with his cane, and Hawkins heard him singing his way down the corridor. But about half an hour later he returned, looking careworn and dejected. Dropping into a chair and with the longest sigh Hawkins had ever heard him fetch, he looked at his disciple and spoke in mournful tone.

"William, I think you'd better leave town for a day or two."

"That so? What's up?"

"Oh, nothing of real moment, but I think you'd better go."

"But I refuse, sir, to stumble off in the dark. I like mystery, but I'll be—"

"Don't swear, Willie."

"That's all right, but I'll be blown if I walk around blindfolded. If our scheme has been blown and we are about to be arrested, why don't you say so? I'm not a child."

"So I hear you say, Billy; but as brave as you are, it happens that in this instance you are a child."

Hawkins flushed. "At any rate, I am in my first instead of my second childhood."

"Mr. Hawkins, I wont put up with that puerile sarcasm. Do you hear?"

"My childish ears are acute enough, sir."

"And your childish prattle is silly enough, sir. Now, it doesn't matter whether you go out of town or not; but it does matter, sir, whether or not you go out of this room."

Up he bounced and held the door open. Hawkins bowed stiffly—acknowledged with a dangerous smile—and passed into his own room. The feeling that the Major was nursing him along enraged his soul. He went out, and passing the door of the drawing-room on his way to the street, he heard his own name called as sweetly as if caroled by a bird. He wheeled around; and there came Cisne Pemberton, with both hands held out.

"Why, Mr. Hawkins, who would have expected to meet you here? Come right in here and give an account of yourself, sir. I think it awfully mean of you to run away from Natchez without even telling me good-by."

Keeping up a continuous chatter, and without giving Hawkins a chance to open his mouth except in astonishment, she led him in to a sofa and sat down beside him.

"Now, sir,"—and she flounced bewitchingly,—“why did you run away so suddenly?"

"Why, I had business down here, you know."

"No, I don't know; and I don't believe it, either. So what have you got to say to that, Mr. Fibber?"

"Nothing except that I'm telling the truth."

"Truth! You can't pull the wool over my eyes."

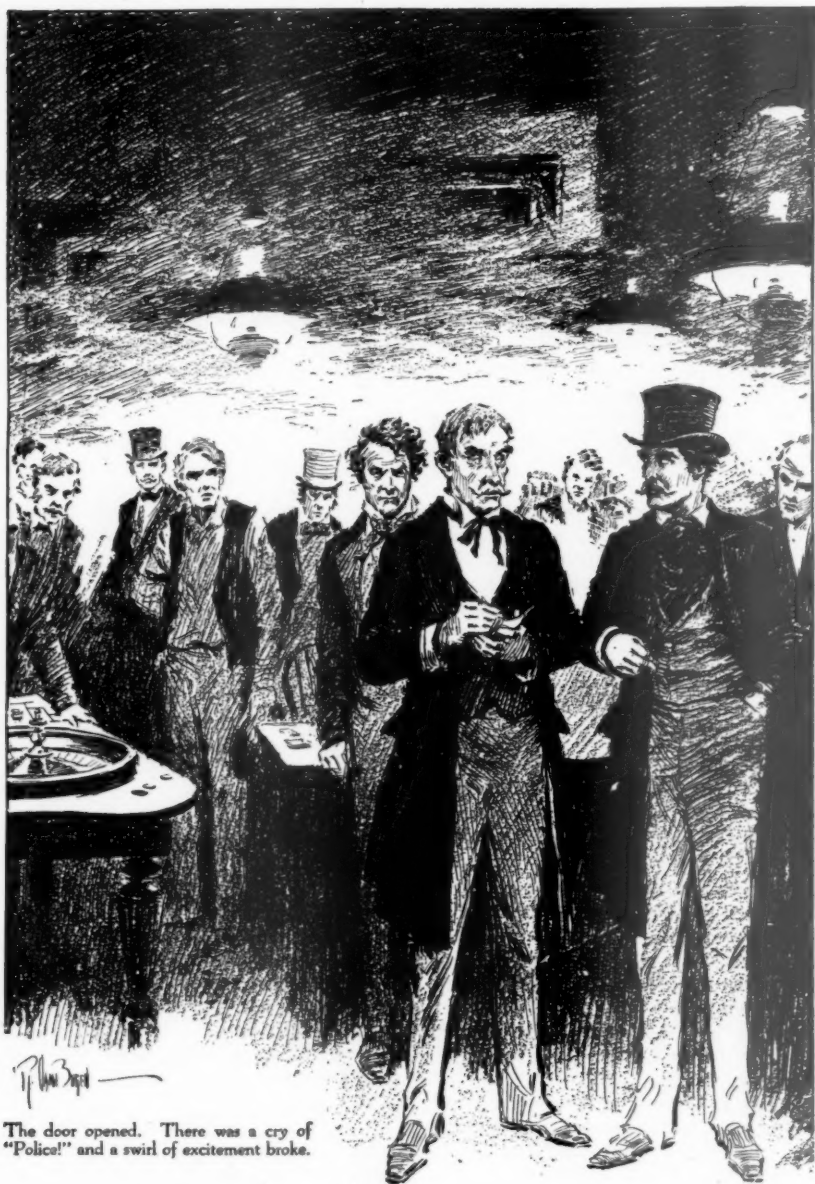
"Ah, and that would be the eclipse of two stars," he said, feeling that he had found himself.

She gave him a rosy pout, twisting her fingers together. Then she laughed merrily: "I like that. But you thought I was mad at you, didn't you? Isn't it easy to think wrong? You know I thought I saw Major Pewitt past just now? I wasn't sure, and I didn't call him, but now I know it was—you thought I was going to say *him*, didn't you? But I wasn't. I was going to say *he*. That's correct, isn't it?"

"Anything you say is correct."

"Then you are a fibber, for I said you were. Got you that time, didn't I?"

"Yes, you did." And Hawkins laughed the silly laugh of happiness without cause; and then in a moment he was as solemn as a trick-dog in a show,



The door opened. There was a cry of "Police!" and a swirl of excitement broke.

realizing that the Major had seen the girl and that she was the cause of his worry.

"What makes you look so serious?"

"I was thinking—"

"I hope you don't think of me when

you look like that. But you haven't told me why you left Natchez so funny-like. I asked Papa, and he said he didn't know; and whenever I'd start to talk about you, he'd talk about something else. It's all so strange, and I don't like

strange things. Please tell me the truth."

Now within Hawkins there arose a struggle, tearing but momentary, and it was not the girl that conquered. He would confess, rid himself of her and reestablish himself with the Major. He had repented of his petulance, and his heart was smiting him.

"Please tell me."

"I will, but you'll never speak to me again."

"Then you mustn't tell me. Please don't."

Her eyes were fever-bright, and with a gesture of pain she put her hand on her bosom.

"But you are wrong in saying that I'd never speak to you again. Tell me."

"It won't take long. One night on the steamer *Black Hawk*, after losing all my money at poker, I went out, disguised myself, came back, held a pistol in the faces of the players and robbed them of their money. It was the act of a highwayman, nothing less. The last time I was at your house I confessed to your father; and he led me to the gate and bade me good-by."

She had moved away from him and sat staring at the wall. In her lap her hands lay limp. Her lips were drawn tight. He arose, she following, and she stood with bowed head. Then she looked into his countenance, tears in her eyes, twice trying vainly to speak. She held forth her hand. Hawkins took it, and it was cold. Then she spoke:

"And—and I had liked you so much! I said that at last I had found a friend I could be free with."

Slowly she led him to the door. "But I can never forget you. I will call you my—my dream. Good-by."

HAWKINS went straightway to the Major's room and knocked. The old man opened the door and held it for him to pass in, as he had held it for him to pass out.

"Major, I have come to beg your pardon."

The old fellow put his hands on Hawkins' shoulders. "It was my fault, Billy."

"I thought so then, but I know better now. . . . I have seen her, and I told

her something that forced her to bid me good-by forever."

"Billy!" He put his arms about him. "You are all right, my son. I have a career laid out for you, and it isn't 'tilting with lips.' This is no time for mawkishness but for perfect freedom of action; and more hampering than any chain on earth is a ribbon, sir. The hardest knot is a bow-knot. A locket worn about a pretty neck may hold more of a young man's destiny than you could cram into an iron safe. So be careful in whose golden locket you put the countenance of your destiny."

The performance was set for a Wednesday night, or perhaps near the dawn of Thursday. Wednesday evening Hawkins met Mrs. Pemberton and Cisne in front of the hotel. The old lady took him cordially by the hand, but the girl held aloof, giving to him no nod of recognition. The woman's manner assured Hawkins that Cisne had kept secret his humiliating confession.

"Daughter, is it possible you don't remember Mr. Hawkins?"

"Yes, I remember meeting him. Come on, Mamma."

"Mr. Hawkins, you must overlook my daughter's foibles. At times, sir, she is the strangest child I ever knew. I hope you will come again to Natchez. Good-by."

Cisne turned about and gave him a look—less than a look, a glance; and for a moment Hawkins felt as he fancied a frightened rabbit must feel. And as slowly he turned away, he saw the Major not far off, shrewdly eying him. Quickly he overtook Hawkins and clutched his arm. For a time they walked in silence toward the old brick hut.

"Billy, you are keeping your word. You are a man."

"I'm a fool."

"Perhaps, but not in keeping away from ratsbane."

"At some time in your life, Major, you must have been badly bitten."

"Billy, I've had my heart chewed like a rat-terrier mouthed by a bulldog. A girl put a ring in my nose and led me around like a calf. Gad, I couldn't sneeze. Then what! She dropped her leading-line and married a damn—"

married an infernal paralytic for his money. Society said she had made a fine match; yes sir. I hung around for a time, and if I hadn't been an honest man, I would have robbed him. Talk about virtue! Billiam, we've got a great haul waiting for us. The games up there have been fine all day. The sugar-mule drovers have stuffed the safe, and if we take out less than a hundred thousand, I shall be most cruelly deceived. They've got to keep a big sum on hand. They stand to win or lose whopping figures. They stand to lose it to-night as sure as I am a gentleman."

Tice, Hall and Ladd were waiting for them. Hawkins was anxious lest upon the near approach of action his patrolmen might show signs of weakness, but they didn't, having no doubt entered at some time the wings and flies of a more desperate performance. The Major saw to every detail of make-up, passed upon every nice adjustment of accouterment; then with a satisfied air he sat down to look upon his work in a sort of general review.

"Boys," he said, "it will be a long time for you to sit here and wait, but the more you accustom yourselves to your uniforms, the more natural you will appear in them."

"Major," said Hawkins, "in all your arrangements you haven't mapped out a line to be pursued in case of failure."

The dramatist sat with his chair tipped back against the wall, smiling. He did not turn off the light of his smile, but talked through it.

"No, Lieutenant, and for the reason that I never invite failure by arranging for it. In the army I knew the commander of an independent company, and he was always forecasting a plan of action in case of retreat; and by gad, he always retreated. His mind ran on it to such a degree that he couldn't picture anything else. I don't believe in doing a thing in a bull-headed way; but in viewing a plan, if failure looms bigger than success, let it alone. Well, reckon I'd better be on my way. As you enter, you will find me, remember, at the first layout, right-hand side, playing faro. Make your entrance at two sharp, and don't forget your lines."

The time for Hawkins was dreary indeed, for his patrolmen were but dull fellows, never having read anything and silent as to their experiences. The air grew heavy; there was the boom of distant thunder down the river, and Hawkins mused over the bombardment by the Yankee fleet, a few years before, which had put the city at the mercy of a merciless Ben Butler. Heavy, fitful showers began to fall, spitting hard aslant against the old wall. One drop was driven through a chink and cracked the chimney of the lamp. The patrolmen began to growl.

"I don't see anything very gay about this," said Hall.

Ladd agreed with him: "Tiresome, I'm telling you."

It now remained for Tice to give his opinion, which he did by observing that it was a drag heavier than a dead horse.

Hawkins was maliciously thankful for an excuse to open up the flask of his sarcasm. "No, not quite so lively as ducking around the corners, hungry and looking for 'veal.' A little more wearisome than a crap-game on the levee. It might be a little more spirited in Vicksburg, making preparations for a trip over to Jackson, where the State keeps an exclusive boarding-house."

"Talks like an auctioneer," came Tice's retort. "Hawkins, if I could spout like that, reckon I'd fool around like this? I'd preach."

"We aint complainin', Hawkins," said Ladd. "But I don't want you to think you've said something smart when you speak of an exclusive boarding-house over at Jackson. I don't reckon you are as well acquainted with such places as you may be after a while. But that's neither here nor there. We've got a job to do to-night, and it's about time to get at it."

DODGING into dark doorways and skipping across deserted streets, they arrived at the stairway leading up into the "Brotherhood Club," owned and operated by "Parson" Chinault. The lower steps were dark, but two gas-jets burned above the landing opening into the gambling-room. There was a round peep-hole in the door, shut off by a slide

like a dark lantern. But nothing was to be dreaded from this apparent caution, for gambling was so free that the door was always opened upon summons and usually without question from the inside. On the landing they halted and stood listening to the familiar sounds. They knew that the faro tables were as silent as the inside of a hearse, but from the roulette wheel came the voice of the spinner of that money-hungry device, announcing the result of a turn, "Red as blood," "Black as a crow," "Little Willie," meaning that the single O had swept the board.

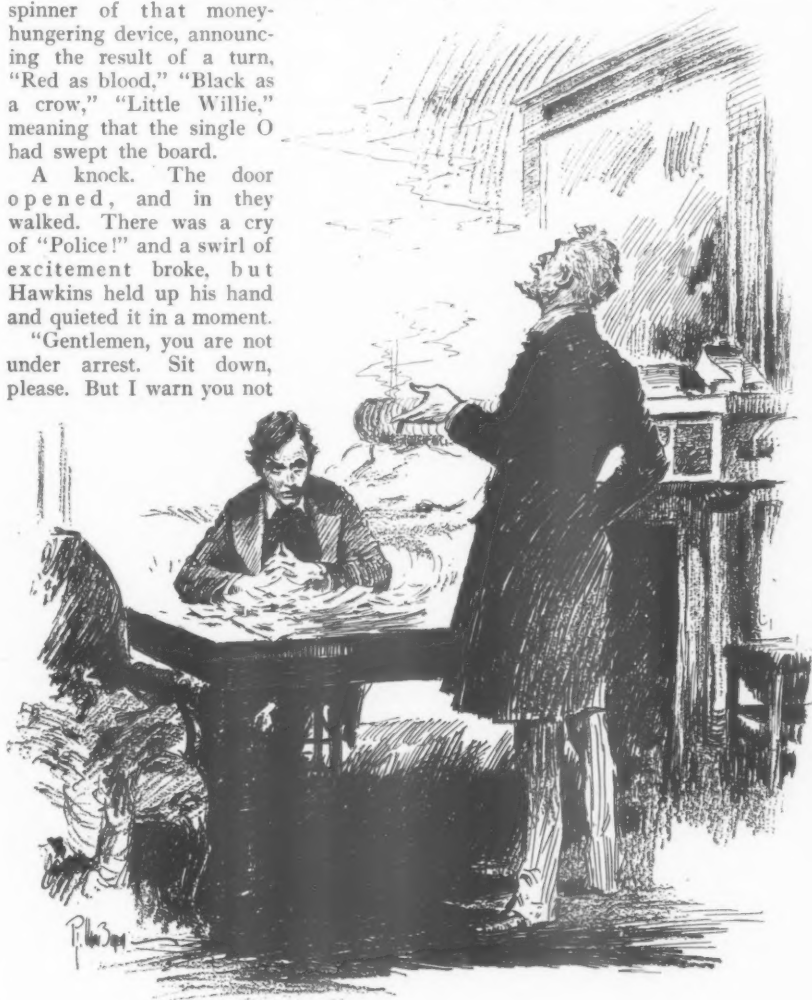
A knock. The door opened, and in they walked. There was a cry of "Police!" and a swirl of excitement broke, but Hawkins held up his hand and quieted it in a moment.

"Gentlemen, you are not under arrest. Sit down, please. But I warn you not

to attempt to leave the house, for the place is surrounded, and if you try to get away you will invite suspicion. Where is Parson Chinault?"

"Here, sir," answered a tall, serious old fellow. "What does this mean?"

"It means, Parson, that the police department has at last been compelled to listen to numerous complaints concerning this house."



Hawkins sat down at the table and began spreading bank-notes on it. "Let me show you," he answered, "— a hundred and sixteen thousand dollars." The Major's eyes looked like the eyes of an owl in the twilight. "Billy," he said, "I hear something buzzing. It is our steamboat, the *Bumblebee*."

"Is that so? Have you got a warrant for your proceedings?"

"I have, sir, signed, as you will see, by Captain Rawlings, of the Bason Street Station."

Hawkins handed over the warrant. The Parson took it, read it and returned it. "Well, what are you going to do?"

"I am going to carry out the Captain's orders. It is left to my discretion as to whether I am to put the nips on you and haul you to the station. I hope that this will not be necessary."

"Then what, sir?"

"I am to transport the contents of your safe, your books and your cash, to the station, where you may appear tomorrow morning at nine o'clock to reclaim your property or to show cause why the same shall not be confiscated and your house closed. I am frank enough to say that some of the charges against you are very grave, but I put you on your honor to appear and face them. Will you open the safe?"

Hereupon the Major came forward. "This is high-handed, sir. And am I to infer that we are all robbed?"

"Not unless you have all been robbed by the manager of this house, sir. Every man present is at liberty to put his money into his pockets."

"I thank you. Gentlemen, that seems fair enough."

"I trust so, sir. Parson, I will give you a receipt for your books and money."

"I've got no books. This aint a library."

"Presumably not. But are you going to unlock that safe? —Sergeant, put the nips on him and bring him along."

"Wait a minute. I haven't said I wouldn't."

Fumblingly he unlocked the safe, took out a bundle of money and to Hawkins whispered the amount. "If what I say aint right, you needn't account for a cent of it. I may not keep books, but I

can count money. There you are, and don't go away with the idee that I didn't give up willing."

Hawkins wrote a receipt and handed it to him. "I hope you'll stand my friend, for I never done nobody no harm," the Parson lamented. "Gentlemen, the game's closed."

"At nine to-morrow," said Hawkins. "Good night."

How quickly it was done! Back to the hut they hustled, wet but the money dry beneath Hawkins' coat. Less than half an hour afterward the Major came in, dripping but as gay as a cock-sparrow. He looked at his actors and nodded his approval of their having, without delay, regarbed themselves as private citizens. Then he sat down, took from his pocket a roll of bank-notes and began to count out three piles.

"Tice, Hall and Ladd, here you are. The *Black Hawk* will leave for St. Louis early this morning. I expect you to go at once and engage passage."

They gathered up their pay and turned toward the Major as if at parting they would shake hands with him.

"No farewell ceremony," he said. "Good-by."

Out they sullenly went, and soon after them the Major and Hawkins slipped away to their hotel. Safely locked in their room, with the shades drawn, the Major threw wet arms about the young man's neck. "How much, Billy?" he asked eagerly.

Hawkins sat down at the table and began spreading bank-notes on it. "Let me show you," he answered, "—a hundred and sixteen thousand dollars."

The Major uttered no word of astonishment, but for a moment his eyes looked like the eyes of an owl in the twilight.

"Billy," he said, "I hear something buzzing. It is our steamboat, the *Bumblebee*."

THE MAJOR and Billy buy their boat, and then—the real story begins. Read "The Duel Under The Oaks," in the June issue of *The Red Book Magazine*, on the news-stands May 23rd.

NAN FARLEY is an impulsive girl whose inclination is

to "wobble to the wrong" but fights till she can "wobble to the right." She has Irish eyes and the Irish temperament. At ten she lived in a shanty which went sailing down the Ohio in a flood. She was rescued by Tim Farley, a wealthy pioneer of an inland city, adopted by him, and brought up with every advantage as his own daughter. But in the blossom of young womanhood she is not the delight to him that she might have been. She is a mimic and clever, and much sought after by the "smart set" which Farley hates. And more, Billy Copeland, who it is rumored has divorced his wife so he may marry Nan and her prospective money, has been encouraged by the girl.

Farley is an invalid, making new wills constantly as Nan pleases him or displeases him. He has forbidden her to see Copeland again. Nan promises, then slips away one day to a luncheon at the country club, where Copeland is to be. She amuses the gay company with an imitation of old Farley's querulousness at doctors, till suddenly she is overcome by remorse, leaves and goes down to the near-by river to be alone. There she notices a young man practicing fly-casting. He breezily introduces himself as Jerry Amidon, a youth who has come from the same Ohio River town where she had been born. He amuses the girl and she allows him to talk to her.

"I broke from the home plate when I was sixteen, and arrived in a freight-car," he tells her. "I now swing a sample-case down the lower Wabash for the well-known house of Copeland-Farley."

In their talk Nan learns that John Eaton, the most fastidious man in town and an able lawyer, is interested in Jerry. When she meets Eaton again she tells him of her early acquaintance with Jerry. Eaton is at once interested in her because of her frankness.

THAT night Farley learns of Nan's disobedience and tells her that if she meets Copeland again there will be no money for her. The girl cajoles him into a better humor and again promises



The Previous Chapters of "The Proof of The Pudding."

to keep away from Copeland and the "smart" people of the town. She really intends keeping her promise.

She meets Fanny, Copeland's divorced wife, who is a pretty, able woman, making a success of a dairy farm. Fanny is gracious to Nan and stirs in the girl a new sense of unworthiness. Eaton notices all this, says a quiet word here and there, and Nan finds herself invited to social affairs by "old families" who had dropped her.

Meanwhile Copeland is drinking steadily, not attending to business and becoming seriously involved. While he is facing ruin his cast-off wife inherits two hundred thousand dollars. But he makes no move to conciliate her, for Farley has a million to leave Nan. He is anxious to make up

with her, and a chance bit of waywardness on Nan's part makes this possible. Nan discovers a will made by Farley in which she is left less than a tenth of what she has expected. The rest is given to charity. Piqued, she meets Copeland, who urges her to an immediate marriage. She consents, but he is drunk the night they are to elope, and Nan leaves the trysting-place in disgust.

That night Farley dies. Nan is sincerely grief-stricken. Next day she finds that a trick lawyer and cousins of Farley's are to contest the validity of her adoption. They also threaten to contest any will Farley may have made, on the ground that he was of unsound mind.

Copeland in a drunken condition now sinks to the depth of trying to burn his drug house to get the insurance. Jerry Amidon saves him in time, and with Eaton, gets him to straighten up. Eaton furnishes the money from some unknown source to put his business on its feet. Nan, thoroughly ashamed of her unworthiness, takes a position at Fanny Copeland's dairy farm and is happier than she has ever been. Jerry Amidon, whom Copeland makes sales manager, makes every chance he can to see her. Nan visits the old home, and finds an unsigned will, in which Farley leaves his entire fortune to her, with Mrs. Copeland as trustee, and with a provision that Nan shall not have the money if she marries against the wishes of Mrs. Copeland.

The Proof Of The Pudding

THE concluding installment
of a fine American novel.

CHAPTER XXIV

"I NEVER STOPPED LOVING HIM!"

WHILE they were still at dinner, Mrs. Copeland was called to the telephone. The instrument was in the living-room; Nan could not avoid hearing Fanny's share in the conversation.

"That's fine—quite splendid!" And then: "I'm so glad! I never can thank you! Well, of course no one must know. You're quite sure? That's good; I might have known you'd manage it just right."

There was a moment's silence after she returned to the table. She dropped a lump of sugar into her coffee and watched the bubbles rise. Then she lifted her head with a smile.

"I suppose, Nancy Farley, that God has made better men than J. C. Eaton,—kinder and more helpful men,—but I've never known them!"

Her lips twitched and there were tears in her eyes.

"I suppose it's his nature to be kind and helpful," Nan replied. "I've never known anyone like him."

"The nice thing about him is that he does you a favor quite as though it were a favor to him. He's just done something for me that no one else could have done; there's no one else I could have asked to do it!"

She lapsed into a reverie, and Nan's thoughts ranged far. If Fanny and Eaton loved each other, how perfect it would be! Their telephonic communications had been frequent of late; nearly every evening Eaton called her, as though by arrangement, at the dinner hour.

From the character of Fanny's responses he seemed to be reporting upon some matter, the nature of which was not apparent, but Fanny always left the telephone in good spirits.

While Fanny was studying the produce market in the afternoon newspaper, Nan went upstairs to get the will. She had set herself a disagreeable task but she did not falter in her determination to go through with it. She glanced through the will again, rehearsed the story as she meant to tell it and returned to the living-room, where Fanny began reciting the day's quotations from the sheet before her.

"Nan, if eggs go much higher we'll be rich by spring. I'm going to double the poultry department next summer. They told me I couldn't make it pay, and now it's the best thing I've got!"

Nan liked these quiet evenings. Sometimes the young women from the farmhouse came in for music, and Nan had once given some of her recitations, much to their delight. At other times Fanny retired to her den to write letters or post her books, leaving Nan to her own devices.

To-night Fanny produced some sewing and bade Nan tell her of her day's experiences.

"I hope the long winter evenings out here are not going to bore you, Nancy," she remarked, seeing the serious look on Nan's face. "Gracious! What's that you have there? It has an official look; we're not being sued, are we?"

"There's something I have to tell you, Fanny. It's not a pleasant subject, but you have to know. You'll see in a moment how hard it is to tell you. And you'll listen, wont you? you'll let me tell

By Meredith Nicholson

ILLUSTRATED
BY C. H. TAFFS



There was a far-away look in her eyes as she slowly stroked the girl's hair, but a smile played about her lips. She did not speak again until Nan's grief had spent itself. Then she bent to the tear-wet face and pressed her cheek against it.

you everything I have to say about it?"

Her heart beat wildly. She flung herself down on a cushion where she could put out her hand and touch her friend.

"Of course, Nancy!" said Fanny kindly. "I should be sorry if you couldn't come to me with anything! I hope

nothing disagreeable has happened."

"Well, it isn't pleasant. And to think I have to bring it home to you! It may be that you won't let me stay any longer after you know. I should hate that; but I should understand it."

She touched with a light caress a fold

of Mrs. Copeland's gown, then withdrew her hand quickly, and began fingering the will nervously.

"The sooner we get through with it the better, Nancy," said Fanny encouragingly.

"Well, I found that other will, the last one Mr. Thurston wrote for Papa. It was stuck behind Mamma's picture where he must have put it when he began destroying the other wills. It isn't signed, but of course I shall have to give it to Mr. Thurston. Perhaps I shouldn't have read it, but I did, and I knew right away that I ought to show it to you. I thought about it all the way out on the car and I'm sure it's the best thing to do."

"You poor child! I should think you'd had enough of wills, without new ones popping out from behind picture frames. If you're sure you want me to see it I'm ready. Let me have it."

NAN passed it to her grudgingly and rose and left the room. She waited in the dark dining-room, watching the headlight of a trolley-car as it neared and passed in the highway below. The time seemed endless. She heard the rustle of paper as Fanny turned the pages. She was reading carefully, and as time passed without any sign from her Nan knew that she was pondering deeply what she read. Nan clung to the window, pressing her forehead against the cold pane. Deep dejection settled upon her; she had made a mistake; it had not been necessary to make this revelation; she had only made Fanny unhappy.....

She felt suddenly the pressure of a warm cheek against her face.

"Come, Nancy! Come back to the fire and let us talk about it," said Fanny in her usual cheery tone. "Of course I never knew of this, never dreamed of any such thing. It's a strange idea; I didn't know such a will could be made; but if it was done with Mr. Thurston's counsel it must be all right. I should have thought, though, that they would have asked me about it. The responsibility is very great—too great—for anyone to take. But of course as the will isn't signed, that's the end of it."

Nan turned wonderingly, doubtful

whether Fanny had grasped the full significance of those phrases that touched so nearly her own life.

"It doesn't say anything about my giving a bond; I might have stolen the money!" Fanny continued lightly. "And if I didn't like your suitors I might have played the rôle of the cruel father for twenty-five years! My! but you've had a narrow escape!"

"Oh, you don't understand; you don't understand!" Nan gasped. "Don't you see? don't you *know* what it all means?"

"Yes; I think I do, Nancy. But we don't need to talk of that. It's only so much paper anyhow, and we needn't bother. The best thing to do is to forget all about it."

"But I can't let it go this way! You are far too kind! I must tell you the rest of it—I must tell you what made him think of this!"

"But why should we talk of it, Nancy? It's plain enough, I suppose, what was in Mr. Farley's mind; but it's all over now. It was just a freak, a grim bit of irony; no doubt if he had lived he would have changed his mind about it. It would have been just as well if you hadn't told me; it really wasn't necessary! I'm sorry you thought it might make any difference."

"Oh, but I had to tell you; I could never have looked you in the face again if I hadn't! He was afraid—he had been afraid for more than a year that—that—"

She could not say it; she could not bring herself to the point of putting into words the intent of Timothy Farley's last will, that was to make it impossible for her to marry this woman's divorced husband! The shame of it smothered her; she wondered that she had ever had the effrontery to eat Fanny Copeland's bread and share her fireside. The very calmness with which Fanny had received the news added to her discomfort.

Fanny began moving about the room with her light, graceful step, touching a book, unconsciously straightening the flowers in a vase on the table. Then she walked to the fire, where Nan crouched mutely watching her.

"Nan, dear, do you want to marry

Billy?" she asked, bending down and resting her hands lightly on Nan's shoulders. No one would have known that this was the first time her former husband had been mentioned between them.

"No, no! That's what makes this so hard—so unjust!"

"Were you ever—did you ever think you could?" Fanny asked in the same calm tone in which there was no hint of accusation.

"Yes; there was a time, there were times—"

Fanny was about to resume her idle wandering about the room, when Nan clasped her knees.

"That's what I want to tell you; I want to tell you everything from the very beginning. Please let me. I ought to have told you before I came here; but I was so eager to come I didn't think of it—it didn't occur to me at all! You see if I don't—if you won't listen—I must go away; I can't spend another night here. You must see that!"

"It is like you—it is generous and kind, Nancy, to want to tell me. But you don't need to; it is all right; it's not a thing that I should ever have asked; you know that."

She drew up a chair and clasped Nan's hand.

Nan told the story, told it in all its details, from the beginning of her acquaintance with Copeland. She took pains to fix dates, showing that she and Copeland were launched upon a lively flirtation and were meeting, usually at the Kinneys', before there had been any hint of a possible divorce. It had been her fault, her most grievous sin, that she encouraged Billy's attentions. They had tickled her vanity. She had admired Billy; he had been a new type of man to her. She described her deception of Farley as to their clandestine meetings; told of his wrath when he learned of her disobedience; and, coming to the frustrated elopement, made it clear that it was through no fault of hers that she had not run away with Copeland and married him.

"But it's all over; even if it hadn't been for this—this idea of Papa's to put you between us, I should never marry Billy. No, no!" she moaned. "I had

decided that before Papa died. You know, don't you," she pleaded, with the tears streaming down her cheeks, "that I wouldn't have come here, I couldn't have pretended to be your friend, if I'd ever meant to do that!"

"You poor Nancy! you poor, dear little girl!" Fanny murmured.

There was a far-away look in her eyes as she slowly stroked the girl's hair, but a smile played about her lips. She did not speak again until Nan's grief had spent itself. Then she bent to the tear-wet face and pressed her cheek against it, whispering:

"You poor little dear! you dear little Nancy!"

"You will let me stay—you will let me stay, after all that?" faltered Nan.

"It was fine of you to tell me; you don't know how grateful I am—and glad. Of course you will stay; it would break my heart to lose you now!"

Nan drew away and looked long into the steady, tranquil eyes. She had not been prepared for this. It was beyond comprehension that her story could be received with so much magnanimity, that forgiveness could be so easily won. She caught the hands that clasped her face and kissed them.

"Oh, you don't know!" she cried fearfully. "I haven't made you understand!"

"Yes, I understand it all, Nancy; I'd guessed most of it without your telling me. And it does make a difference; yes, it makes a very great difference;" and then feeling Nan's hands relax their tight hold, and seeing the fear in her face, she smiled and added, "but not the difference you think!"

"Oh, if only you don't send me away! It was brazen of me ever to come; I don't know how you came to take me in, without a question, when I'd done you the greatest wrong one woman can do another."

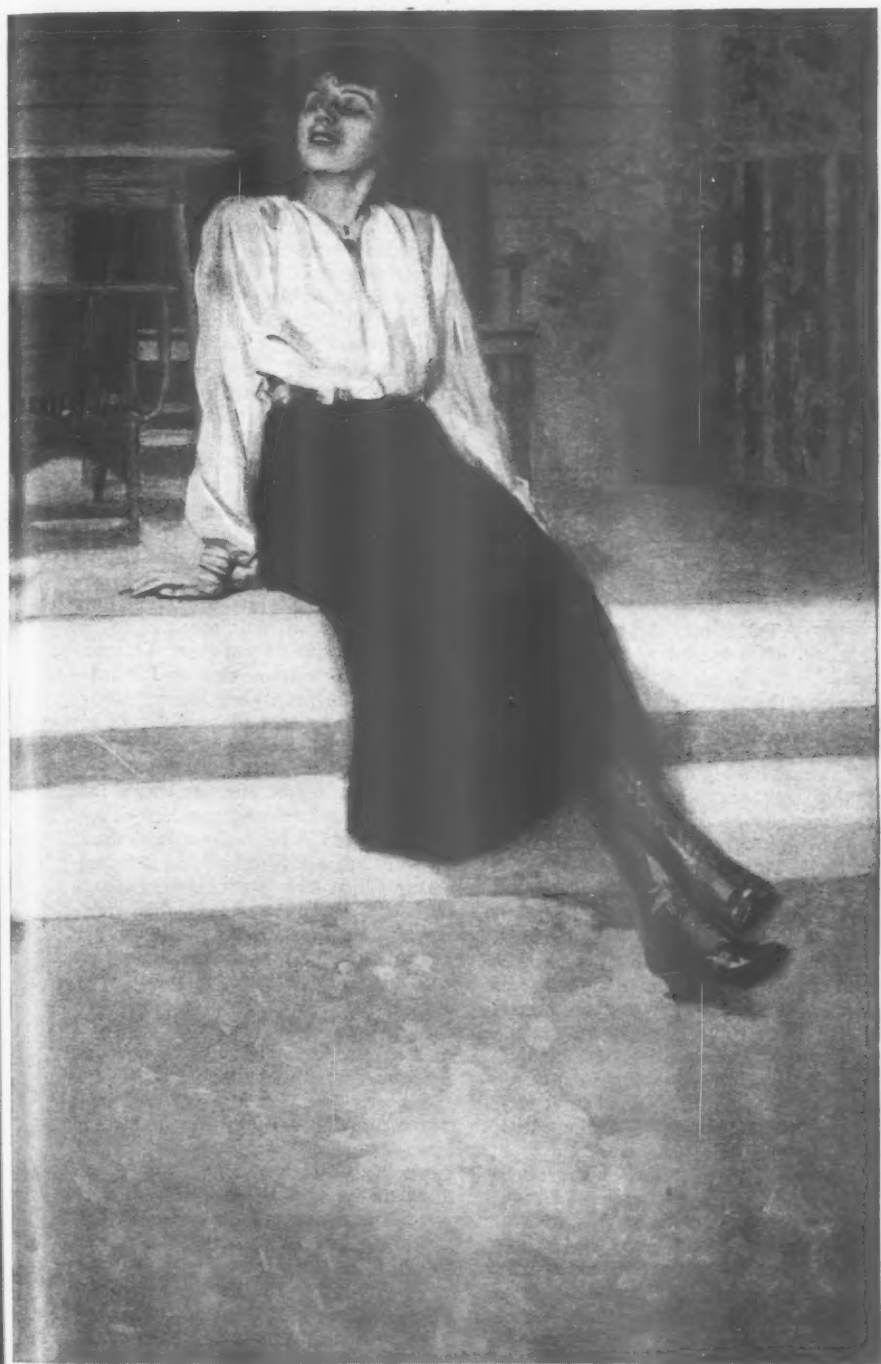
"But maybe you didn't!" said Fanny quickly with a wistful little smile. "I'm going to ask you one question, Nancy—just to be sure. But you needn't answer; you won't feel you must, will you?"

"Anything—anything!" Nan faltered.

Fanny turned her head as though doubting, questioning, and her eyes were very grave.



"Thurston and I are not sentimentalists," said Eaton. "We've given you free rein to



in to
indulge your whims; but now we've come to a point where we've got to take a hand."

"Then, Nancy, tell me this—and please be very honest, and don't trouble about what I may think or feel about your answer: do you—do you love Billy—now?"

"No; no! It was never love; it was never really that! And I haven't any feeling about him at all any more except—just friendliness, and—pity!"

Fanny freed her hands and clasped Nan tightly.

"Then I'll tell you something that will show you how very dear you are to me. I think it was this that drew me to you—made me want to be friends with you when Mr. Farley first brought us together. Oh, Nan,"—her voice sank to a whisper,—*"I still love Billy! I never stopped loving him!"*

CHAPTER XXV

THE INSCRUTABLE MR. EATON

EATON tore March from his office calendar, crumpled it in his hand and glanced out of the window as though expecting to see April's heralds dancing over the roofs below. It was nearing five o'clock and his big desk was swept clear of the day's encumbrances. He paced the floor slowly, his gaze ranging the walls with their ranks of file-cases. A particular box in the "C" section seemed to exert a spell upon him. He glanced at it several times, then opened a drawer in his desk, peered in and absently closed it. He was waiting for Copeland, and as usual, when he expected a visitor, was planning the interview to its minutest details.

Since the reorganization of the Copeland-Farley Company he had been seeing much of Copeland. The winter had wrought changes in Billy—changes that at first provoked cynical comment from persons who had no faith in his reformation. But people were now beginning to say that they always knew Billy had the right stuff in him. Even the fact—which was pretty generally known—that Billy had narrowly escaped disaster, didn't matter particularly. Such fellows were always lucky. If the decision in the Kinney patent case hadn't come just

when it did he would have been down and out; but it *had* come.

Eaton was breathing easier now, as days passed and Copeland seemed to have settled into a sober and industrious routine. Copeland was even giving time to broadening the scope and effectiveness of the Bigger Business Club, and had accepted a place on the municipal reform committee of the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Jeremiah A. Amidon pointed to his boss with pride. Jerry had risen to the dignity of a standing invitation to Sunday evening tea at Mrs. Copeland's and was the proudest and happiest of Jerries.

Three slight snarls of a desk buzzer, marked, to the attentive ear, by an interval between the second and third, spelled *Copeland* in the office code. Eaton raised his arm and pressed a button attached to a swinging cord over his desk. By this system acceptable visitors could be announced by the girl in the reception-room and disposed of at long range. If Eaton didn't want to be bothered he made no response. This was only one of his many devices for safeguarding his time. When he was studying a case, he ignored the presence of his most remunerative clients, on the theory that they were unlikely to have anything of importance to impart. It was a fair assumption that before he undertook any case he extracted from the client's head and stored in a file-box all the information of which that particular client was possessed. Clients resented this treatment but as Eaton was admittedly the best patent lawyer in three States, they were obliged to humor him.

COPELAND entered with a quick, springing step. Jerry had persuaded him to spend an hour three times a week at Gaylord's, and as a result Copeland was in prime condition. He nodded to Eaton and sat down in the chair the lawyer pushed toward him.

"The state of your desk fills me with envy; I never get mine as clean as that. If I turn my back somebody throws something on it."

"Oh, my system has its disadvantages; strangers coming in think I haven't any business. You wanted to speak about those notes?"

"Yes; they're due to-morrow and I'm ready to take them up. Our merchandise bills are cleaned up, and my personal obligations are all taken care of. Our credit's A 1. The White River National is taking good care of us and they're not as fussy as the Western was."

"The Western isn't a bank," remarked Eaton; "it's a pawn-shop with a third-degree attachment. About the notes," he continued, tipping himself back in his chair and crossing his slender legs, "you don't have to pay them to-morrow. They can be carried longer—indeinitely. It's just as you say. It might be best to accept an extension of three or six months."

"No, thanks! I've got the money to pay and you may be dead sure it's a comfortable feeling to know I've got it! I hope I'll never have to sweat as I did for a year or two." He frowned, and slapped his gloves together. "Look here, Eaton, you're the hardest man to thank I ever saw, but for God's sake don't ever think I don't appreciate all you've done for me! You saved me—hauled me out when I was going down for the last time! I don't know why you did it; there was no reason why you or anybody else should have done it."

"It's not I you have to thank; it's an enlightened judiciary that upheld Kinney's patents."

"There may be something in that," Copeland admitted, "but there are other things I want to speak of. I insist on speaking of all of them. In picking up that Reynolds stock as you did—"

"Please stick to facts! It was our blithe gazelle Amidon who did that. I honestly didn't know it was in existence till he came to me about it. Thank Jerry!"

"Thank him! I'm going to fire him if he doesn't quit working me so hard," laughed Copeland. "But you backed him, and advanced him the money. The way that boy strolled in with that certificate just as Eichberg was jamming me into a corner is the last thing I'll think of when I die."

"Strong sense of the dramatic, that Jerry!" observed Eaton musingly. "Great loss to the stage, his devotion to commerce."

"He can sell goods and he knows how to hypnotize other fellows into doing it. I'm giving him all the rope he wants. He's the smartest youngster on the street, and I'm proud of him. There's more than that; I'm going to tell you because you've been mighty good to me and I want you to know just how desperate I was last November. I want you to know how near bottom I'd gone. Eaton, I tried to burn the store the night before the Western notes came due, and I'd have done it—I'd have done it if Jerry hadn't stopped me!

"God!" he groaned. His frame shook with repulsion and abhorrence and he turned his head to avoid Eaton's eyes.

"It's a good thing, Copeland," said the lawyer, quietly, "that we're not allowed to be as bad as we want to be in this world. No man is ever that! That, for a lack of a better word, is my religion. Let's go back to the notes. You say you prefer to pay them; but that's wholly optional. It had occurred to me that you might want to keep the money in the business, and if you do it's yours, quite indefinitely."

Copeland shook his head and drew out a check.

"I made a big clean-up on my cement stock, and now that I'm out of it, I'm never going to monkey on the outside again. Here you are, with interest!"

Eaton read the check, mentally verified the interest and opened the top drawer of his desk.

"There are four notes of twenty-five thousand each," he remarked, as he bent over his desk and wrote "Paid" across the four slips of paper. "They were made to me—you remember? As I told you at the time, I wasn't making the advance myself, and I deserve no thanks for negotiating the loan—none whatever. You're entitled to the canceled notes, of course; but perhaps you'll be satisfied to let me destroy them here in your presence. The reason for that is that I endorsed the notes to the person who made the advance. That person is very anxious not to be known in the matter."

"I think I ought to know," Copeland replied. "A debt like that can't just be passed over. I'd be more comfortable if I knew."

"Perhaps—" began Eaton.

Copeland shook his head and put out his hand.

Eaton bent a quick, penetrating glance upon him, then gave him the notes. Copeland's face went white as he read the endorsement.

"Fanny!" he gasped chokingly. He bent forward and grasped Eaton's arm. "This is a trick, a ghastly joke! She never would have done it; no human being would have done this after—after—"

"No human being—no!" replied Eaton, swinging round in his chair so that he did not face Copeland for a moment.

Copeland's hands shook as he looked again at the endorsements.

"But, Eaton, you had no right to do it! You knew I wouldn't have taken her help—not—after—"

"No, I knew you wouldn't. And she knew you wouldn't. That, of course, is why she did it in the way she did."

THE intentness of Copeland's thought showed in his face; he continued to turn over the notes in his shaking hands.

"But you will tell her how beyond any thanks this is—beyond anything I can do or say!" He bent his head and went on brokenly: "It would be cruel, Eaton, if it weren't so kind, so generous, so merciful!"

"I think you have done enough already to show your appreciation," replied Eaton. "I'll say to you that you've done what she expected—and what, to be frank about it, I did not expect. At least I wasn't very sanguine. You'd gone pretty far—farther than men go and come back again. You've proved your mettle. If you go on as you are, you are safe. And I'm glad—happier about it than I've been about anything in a mighty long time."

"I can't understand it. I was worse than even you imagine. I treated her as a man doesn't treat his dog!"

"Yes," Eaton acquiesced. "It was all that."

"And you can see how it leaves me," Copeland moaned, crumpling the notes in his hand, "with a debt these things don't express."

"There's something you can do, Copeland, if you will. She hasn't asked it; I have no reason to think it has even occurred to her. It's my own idea—absolutely; I want you to be sure of that. It strikes me as being only decent, only just."

"Yes, yes!" Copeland eagerly assented.

"I'm going to speak plainly, Copeland. It's about Manning. You let the impression get abroad that your wife had given you cause to doubt her loyalty. Yes; I know all about it. Manning was your friend, not hers. The injury was not only to her; it was to that man too. Your use of him to cast suspicion on the woman you had sworn to shield and protect, was infamous, dastardly! Manning, I have reason to believe," (his eyes ranged the file-cases) "is a gentleman, a high-minded fellow, who admired your wife only as any friend might be expected to admire her; but you used him—made him an excuse to hide your own infamy. You hadn't the courage to bring him into court; you merely let some of your new-found friends whisper insinuations that were more damning than a direct charge of infidelity. Manning cut your acquaintance, I believe, when he found what you had done. You owe him an apology, at least. And if you want to act the part of a man you will go to Mrs. Copeland and tell her the truth."

Eaton's feelings had for once got the better of him; several times his voice betrayed deep emotion. He turned toward his desk as the buzzer sounded a cryptic message. He telegraphed a reply, and a moment later the sound of steps in the corridor was followed by the closing of a door.

"I will do it—I will do it," said Copeland. "As I began to get my bearings again that thing troubled me; it had been in my mind to speak to you about it. God knows I want to make reparation for all the evil I've done. I was a brute, a coarse beast. And you're right that Manning is a gentleman, and a mighty fine fellow—he never was anything else! I'll go to him and be glad to do it. But to see Fanny—that is not so easy! You can understand that, Eaton."



IN the Spring the young man's fancy
Lightly turns to thoughts of sport.
Then to make you spry and prancey
Food like this is just the sort.



A Spring Favorite—

Exactly the food you enjoy, and exactly the food your system calls for. Both at once.

Now is the time to modify the heavy winter diet. You want to "thaw out"—just as all nature is doing. Your diges-

tion, your nerves, your whole constitution feel the benefit of

Campbell's Vegetable Soup

It supplies the strengthening qualities of good meat together with the tonic elements and vegetable salts that every one specially needs at this season.

The strong, full-bodied stock is made from selected beef. In this stock we blend an abundance of choice vegetables—potatoes, carrots, yellow turnips, tomatoes, green okra and other fine vegetables—beside "alphabet" macaroni. The whole is flavored tastily with celery and parsley and just a touch of sweet red peppers to complete the appetizing zest.

Why not enjoy the regular benefit of this invigorating Campbell "kind" on your table? Order a few cans from your grocer and have some *today*.

21 kinds

10c a can

Campbell's SOUPS

LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

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"I think it best for you to see Mrs. Copeland first," replied Eaton, "—then Manning."

Copeland, pondering with knit brows, nodded his acquiescence.

"Well, I will do as you say; but what if she'd refuse? You can see that it's going to be hard."

"It's conceivable that she'd refuse, of course. She never meant for you to know of her help, and I've broken faith in telling you; but I'll take the responsibility of sending you to see her. And I made this other suggestion—about Manning—with a feeling that sooner or later it would occur to you. I'm glad you've met me in this spirit. It confirms my impression of you; it satisfies me that I was right in assuming that once you got back in the straight road you would keep it."

"I'm not going to disappoint you, Eaton. I don't intend to be pointed out as a failure in this community. The mistakes I've made have been bad ones—the very worst! God knows I'm humble enough when I think of Fanny. It was like her to want to save me. That's what makes it so hard—that it was like her to do it!"

"Yes," said Eaton gravely; "it was like her."

He took his overcoat from a closet and drew it on, mused a moment, apparently absorbed in contemplation of the interior of his hat.

"Mrs. Copeland is here, waiting to see me. She came a moment ago and is in the next room. My business with her is not so important as yours. Come!"

Copeland, startled, irresolute, followed him to the door that opened into a smaller room. Eaton opened it.

"I shall be dining at the club later, if you care to see me," he said, and vanished.

CHAPTER XXVI

"JUST HELPING, JUST BEING KIND!"

NAN crossed a pasture, whistling. The Holsteins, nibbling the young grass, lifted their heads and bent their slow, meditative gaze upon her. She paused to pat one of

them on the nose. Nan was growing wise in dairy lore and knew at sight the heaviest producers of the herd. She resumed her whistling and went on, with a pair of robins hopping before her. June had come and summer sounds and scents filled the air.

As she neared the bungalow a motor stopped and discharged Eaton and Thurston.

"A child of the pastures! The daughter of Cincinnatus tripping in from the fields!" observed Eaton, shaking hands.

"Just been tinkering an incubator, if you want the facts—counting chickens before they're hatched," laughed Nan, brushing a straw from her skirt.

"We have a small business matter to discuss with you, Nan. We'll fall upon it at once if you're agreeable."

"Business!" Nan mocked. "I hoped you'd come to look at the dairy."

This was a very different Nan, Eaton reflected, from the girl he had encountered on the golf links nearly a year before. Exposure to wind and sun had already given her a becoming tan. Her old listlessness, a somewhat defiant air she had sometimes worn, had vanished; she had become alert, self-reliant, resolute. Within the bounds of her self-respect she meant that the world should like her. A democratic young person, this new Nan, on good terms with truck farmers, humble drivers of grocers' wagons, motormen and market-house policemen. In her short skirt and plain blue blouse, she looked less than her years to-day.

"We can sit on the veranda if you gentlemen are not afraid of the country air."

"I wouldn't dare go in after that," remarked Thurston dryly; "Eaton already refers to me as his learned senior."

"Mr. Eaton is the youngest and the oldest man in the world!" Nan declared.

"Well, Miss Farley," Thurston began as he opened a formidable leathern pouch, "as we telephoned you yesterday, the opposition of Mr. Farley's relatives has been disposed of and your adoption was upheld by the court. To prevent an appeal and get rid of them for good we've agreed on your behalf to pay the

(Continued on 6th following page)



THE APACHE TRAIL FROM A MOTOR

BY

WILLARD P. COLEMAN

THE subtle joy of surprise is after all the alluring thing about travel. And for that reason the magic pathway that leads over the Apache Trail in Arizona is one of the most rewarding journeys in America.

Thousands of travelers to California this year are likely to enjoy for the first time this splendid motor highway which opens up the former impenetrable fastness of the Apaches and enables them to cover the 120 miles between Globe and Phoenix in a single day.

Six years ago one could hardly have picked a wilder and more inaccessible region than this Apache land. In fact, thirty years ago this journey would have been quite as much as one's life was worth. Over the trail that leads through

Salt River Valley, renegade Indians once swept down upon luckless pioneers until the capture of Geronimo in '86 put an end to the murderous warfare. Today all that is left of the raiders is a cave full of bones—grim relics of an Apache war party that refused to surrender to United States soldiers.

In places the trail is worn deep by the feet of Indian ponies whose riders thundered down upon the luckless Maricopa farmers in the wide valley below. But for the greater part of the journey the trail is a broad, smooth highway which has been flung over seemingly impassable mountains or chiselled out of the jutting sides of canyon walls.

* * * * *

The automobile into which one steps



THIS ROCKBOUND GATEWAY IS ROOSEVELT DAM. ONE OF THE WONDERS OF THE "APACHE TRAIL." IT HOLDS IN CHECK THE LARGEST ARTIFICIAL LAKE IN THE WORLD.



THE TALL SAGUAROS
POINT THE WAY OVER
SUPERSTITION MOUN-
TAIN.



ANCIENT CLIFF
DWELLING SEEN
ALONG THE APACHE
TRAIL.



A TURN IN THE TRAIL AT MORMON FLATS.

at Globe in the morning suddenly leaves the scrambling houses on the hilly outskirts of the town and disappears into surging slopes of sapphire rock whose grandeur seems to have sprung Sphinx-like out of the Arizona desert. Under the spell of rapturous colors one seems to forget the present in the tales unfolded about these mysterious labyrinths. Ages before any medicine man had supplicated the Great Spirit for water, Chief Morning Green, enraged, drove Rain-Man and Wind-Man out of the country and their flight left the dry skeletons of streams and the mysterious stillness of canyons which remain to this day.

Another picturesque legend tells how Thunder shot fire into all the trees and bushes so that they remained tinged with gold and of how Earth Doctor spouted a mouth full of medicine water into the skies and made the Milky Way. No superstitious Apache forgets how Chief White Feather and all his people were cut down. In the days of the great deluge when the earth was covered with water, White Feather and his followers escaped from the rising floods by scaling the heights of Superstition Mountain. There, with face upturned to the vivid

lightning, the chief held out with suppliant prayers his precious medicine stone carried with him in his flight. A bolt from heaven struck the stone, breaking it into a thousand pieces, and in an instant White Feather and those with him became rigid pinnacles of rock. Today the pious Indians point to the rocky spires upon

the mountain top as proof of their tale.

* * * * *

All the while the swift-running motor has been steadily climbing through a country of marvelous contrasts, now losing itself in a narrow canyon, now reappearing mysteriously at the edge of an overhanging cliff, till suddenly the crest of the divide is mounted and Apache Land, bathed in exquisite tints, lies spread before us. The grandeur of the scene grips us with a thrill of awe. Under the magic Arizona sky, buttes and mesas, domes and pinnacles seem to melt into a languorous picture, whose delicate pastel colors beckon to us to linger and dream the hours away—But the galloping cylinders are carrying us across the summit and down into the valley of Tonto Basin where for an hour we play hide and seek with shadows from sharp pencilled peaks and tall saguaros, the giant cacti of the desert.

To the westward lies Roosevelt Lake, a vast inland sea of fresh water. As we approach it our gaze is directed to the face of the cliff far above the trail. Here are the crannied homes of primeval man—the ancient cliff dwellers. A

slight detour and half an hour's climb and we are standing before these quaint burrows. The ceilings are only four feet above the floor, the doors but two feet high and eighteen inches wide. The tiny windows are capped with flat stone lintels and the walls are constructed of pieces of flat stone laid up in mud and plastered inside and out. There are seven colonies in the Four Peak Range. Judging from the amount of material scattered about and the appearance of what is still standing, this community consisted originally of about sixty rooms. Of this number twenty are in a sufficient state of preservation to render the trip of fascinating and romantic interest. Even those who do not wish to leave their motor car may see a great deal in passing over the "Trail" which skirts the under side of the cliffs.

The builders of these prehistoric dwellings would gaze in astonishment could they see what modern man has erected not far from their ancient homes.

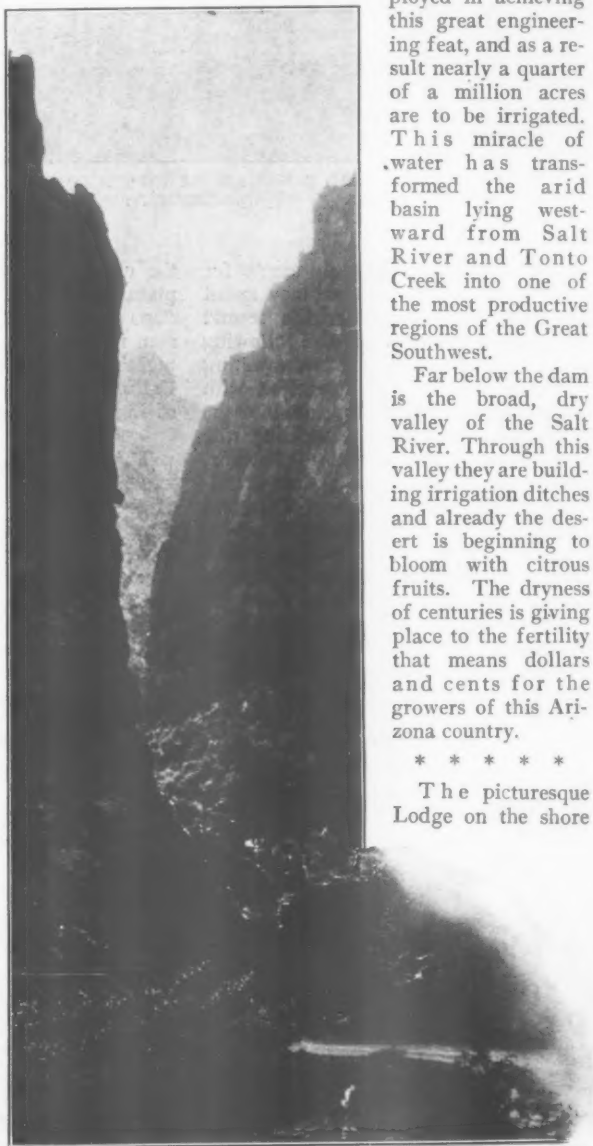
The great Dam which holds in check Roosevelt Lake is 280 feet high with a crest of 1,125 feet. The ultimate capacity of the power plant which it operates will be 9,380 horse-power. For nearly five years two thousand men were em-

ployed in achieving this great engineering feat, and as a result nearly a quarter of a million acres are to be irrigated. This miracle of water has transformed the arid basin lying westward from Salt River and Tonto Creek into one of the most productive regions of the Great Southwest.

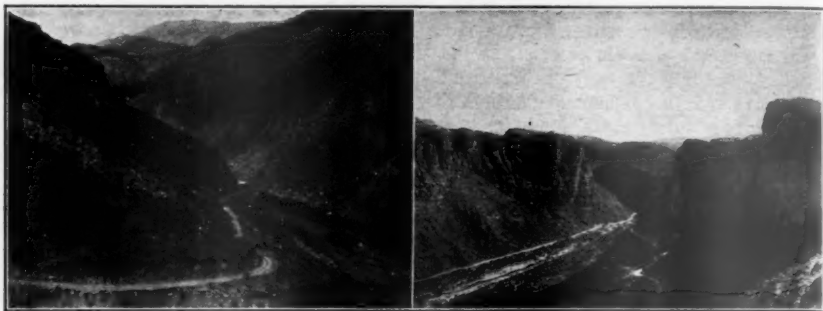
Far below the dam is the broad, dry valley of the Salt River. Through this valley they are building irrigation ditches and already the desert is beginning to bloom with citrous fruits. The dryness of centuries is giving place to the fertility that means dollars and cents for the growers of this Arizona country.

* * * * *

The picturesque Lodge on the shore



THIS HITHERTO INACCESSIBLE REGION IS NOW TRAVERSED IN COMFORTABLE MOTOR CARS WHICH ARE OPERATED DAILY BETWEEN GLOBE AND PHOENIX, ARIZONA.



WHERE THE APACHE TRAIL WINDS LIKE A RIBBON OF SILVER UNDER A CLOUDLESS ARIZONA SKY.

of the Lake looks invitingly ample for a stay, and, if we wish, we may spend the night here and defer the second stage of the journey until the following day. But with more wonders awaiting us we are eager to be off, and so, with luncheon over, we climb again into the automobile, ready for the thrilling ride through gulch and canyon to Phoenix, eighty miles away. Soon we are crawling up Fish Creek Canyon. Then old "Arrowhead" darts into view, hammered out of solid rock, so the Apaches believe, by Chief One-Eye, whose misshapen form scowls at us further up the trail.

Now comes Hell's Canyon, a bottomless abyss; then dizzy "Whirlpool Rock" and "Superstition Mountain." Once past this final range the miles flow behind with rhythmic beat until the far spread of the Arizona desert gives place to the green of irrigated farms and the tree lined streets of Phoenix. Here

the car draws up in the palm shaded plaza of the railway station and one steps into the quiet, comfortable Pullman in ample time for dinner. Then a night's swift ride means the roses of California and the hospitable welcome of Los Angeles.

* * * * *

To reach the "Apache Trail," the westbound traveler leaves the main line of the Southern Pacific at Bowie, Arizona, where the stop-over is arranged to include the rail and motor side trip. A short run from Bowie to Globe, Arizona, over the Arizona Eastern Railway, takes him to the eastern terminus of the Trail, where comfortable seven-passenger touring cars are entered for the trip to Phoenix. East-bound the route is reversed, the main line of the Southern Pacific being left at Maricopa for a short trip over the Arizona Eastern to Phoenix, where the automobile is taken for the run to Globe.



ON EITHER SIDE OF THE TRAIL RISE GREAT MASSES OF ROCKS IN BUTTES OR SPIRES OR MIGHTY DOMES, THEIR STRATA ALL ASKEW, JUST AS THEY WERE THROWN UP FROM THE DEPTHS BY REBELLIOUS THUNDER.

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two cousins ten thousand dollars apiece. Mr. Eaton would have preferred to fight it clear through, but I prevailed on him not to make our professional brother Harlowe work too hard. You may not know it, but Eaton is a remarkably belligerent person. There's no compromise in him."

He looked from Eaton to Nan over his glasses with a twinkle in his eyes.

"I never saw a fellow I wanted to smash as badly as I did Harlowe," Eaton remarked. "He's the smoothest rascal I've ever known."

"I don't see that you've been very generous," said Nan. "How much will he get as a fee?"

"About nine-tenths of the twenty thousand would be my guess," replied Thurston grimly.

"Rather less than that," said Eaton with one of his faint smiles. "I started the secretary of the White River Trust Company down to see the esteemed cousins before we signed the agreement; told him to persuade them to confide their ill-gotten gains to the company and advise them to cut off Harlowe with a niggardly ten per cent for his services. I was afraid to tell you that, Thurston. I knew you would scold me."

"Eaton, for combined ingenuity and malevolence you haven't an equal!" said Thurston, chuckling.

"I don't believe it," cried Nan, glad that the interview had opened so cheerfully.

"Now, Miss Farley," Thurston resumed, "if there's anything a lawyer doesn't like it's an ungrateful client. Mr. Eaton and I have a sneaking feeling that we've done pretty well with this case. The credit is chiefly his—and I take off my hat to him. We've come here in the hope that we sha'n't have to argue with you, but just tell you. Your scruples against accepting any share in Mr. Farley's estate, expressed after his death, did you credit—in a way. But now it's all yours; there's no escape. A considerable amount of income has already accumulated, and we can arrange payments necessary for your support to begin at once. So far as your ability to earn your own living is concerned, you have demonstrated that. You have shown a plucky

spirit, and I admire it. I will go further and say that the community has supported you strongly and that your attitude has made many friends for you. But now—now we must have no more of this nonsense!"

He waved his hand to indicate the fields, and glanced meaningfully at Nan's heavy walking shoes, which were disgracefully muddy.

"But that was settled—once and for all!" Nan replied firmly. "You mustn't think me ungrateful for what you've done; but I thought that all out before I came here, and I haven't had a single regret. If it isn't impolite, I'll say that all I want is to be let alone!"

"Thurston and I are not sentimentalists," said Eaton. "We've given you free rein to indulge your whims; but now we've come to a point where we've got to take a hand."

"But you can't make me, if I won't!" laughed Nan. "Just think how humiliating it would be to back down now after I said I wouldn't! Worse than that, think of the effect on these girls we have at work here; they'd lose their respect for me if they found I wasn't really as poor as they are! And there are other reasons, too," she went on soberly. "I don't like to go over this again, but I never deserved anything of the Farleys'. I've got my conscience to live with, and I could never get on with it if I allowed myself to take money which Papa knew it was best for me not to have. I'm serious about this. He knew me better than I knew myself. You understand what I mean—"

"I don't understand it in the way you mean, Nan," Eaton answered; "but let's not argue it. Let's be practical. Has it occurred to you that something has to be done with this property? It will be confiscated by the State and spent by a lot of politicians if you refuse it. A lawful heir can't just walk off and leave an estate like this. Take the money and buy a lot of farms with it or spend it on working girls as much as you like—but please forget that you ever thought of refusing it."

Eaton had spoken lightly, but she saw that he was very much in earnest. The contingency he suggested had not, in



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cheeks—the kind
where color comes
and goes?"*

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fact, occurred to her. She had assumed from the beginning that the adoption would be nullified and that Farley's money would be divided among the obscure and shadowy cousins; and this abrupt termination of the case brought her face to face with an unforeseen situation. Thurston was quick to take advantage of her silence.

"You have to consider, Miss Farley, what your foster-father's feelings would be. He was a just man, and all the wills he considered from time to time prove that he never had the slightest intention of disinheriting you. Even in that last will creating the trusteeship he made you his sole heir. It was really the most generous of all! Oh, yes," he exclaimed hastily as Nan colored deeply, "there was, I suppose, a certain bitterness behind that. I want to say to you again that I did my best to dissuade him from that step. I was confident he would change his mind about it as he had about so many other things in his varying moods and tempers; and that he would realize its unkindness. We have no right to assume that when he hid that will behind his wife's picture he had any intention of executing it. It's an open question and it's only fair to give him the benefit of the doubt."

"That's true enough," Nan assented; "but when I read that will and found how bitter he had been I knew I had done the right thing in refusing to take anything!"

"I don't agree with you," Thurston continued patiently. "You must be just; you must remember that that was the act of a man near his death—nearer than any of us imagined. He didn't have a chance to change his mind again. It's unjust to his memory to leave him in the wrong utterly, as you will if you persist. There has already been a great deal of talk about this attack on the adoption—people have been blaming him for not guarding against the possibility of any such thing. You see public sentiment is behind you! And in spite of anything you may say, your act would have the appearance of pique; it would be like slapping a dead man in the face!"

"Mr. Thurston is right, Nan," said Eaton. "There is not only Mr. Farley's

memory as a kind and just man to protect, but you must guard yourself against even the appearance of resentment. The only thing you have to consider is Mr. Farley's conscientious desire to provide for you, which was manifest at all times. As Mr. Thurston says, that last will gave you absolutely everything, cutting out all the bequests he had made at other times to benevolence and charity. My dear Nan, your scruples are absurd! You haven't any case at all! The idea of letting the property Timothy Farley spent a laborious lifetime accumulating go to the State is horrible. I can readily imagine what his feelings would be! Why, my dear Nan, rather than let that happen, Thurston and I will steal the whole thing ourselves!"

SHE received this with a grudging smile. What they said about the injustice to Farley of a refusal impressed her, but her resolution was still unshaken. And there was a stubborn strain in her that she had only lately discovered.

She reached for a pencil, and Eaton pushed a pad of paper toward her. She began jotting down the various bequests to charity as provided in the series of wills, pausing now and then to refer to Thurston for verification.

The total was three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. She tapped the paper reflectively.

"Of course," remarked Thurston anxiously, as he saw what was in her mind, "you are not bound by any of the legacies in those unsigned wills. His last will is evidence that he had wholly changed his mind about them."

"We're bound to accept that last will as convincing proof of his very great confidence in Miss Farley," said Eaton quickly, "rather than as an expression of distrust."

"We all know perfectly well what he meant by that," Nan replied. "But I don't want you to think I have any feeling about it."

They nodded gravely as she glanced at them appealingly.

"I can see," she went on hurriedly, "that my refusal to accept anything at all might look like resentment; that it would be in a way unjust to him." She

turned for a glance over the fields as though seeking their counsel. "Papa really wanted to help people who hadn't a chance. He was only hard on the idle and shiftless. If he hadn't been big-hearted and generous, he never would have taken me up as he did. And Mamma was like him. I feel strongly that even if he did change his mind sometimes, his wish to help these things—the Boys' Club, the Home for Aged Women, and all the rest should be respected."

"That can't be done unless you take the whole," said Eaton. "But you needn't decide about it now."

"Yes; you should wait a few years at least!" added Thurston, crossing his legs nervously.

"And since I've been out here and have learned about the girls Mrs. Copeland brings here to help I've thought of some other things that might be done," said Nan, ignoring their manifest unwillingness to acquiesce in her recognition of Farley's benefactions. "There ought to be, in a town like this, a home and training school for girls who start the wrong way, or make mistakes. We haven't anything that quite fills that need, and there are a good many such girls. A hundred thousand dollars would provide such a place and it ought to have another hundred for endowment. Mrs. Copeland and I have talked of the need for such a school. It would be fine to start something like that! And you know," she added, "I might have been just such a girl myself!"

Thurston turned to Eaton helplessly.

"It's as plain as daylight," Eaton remarked, amused by the despair in his associate's face, "that you will soon pauperize yourself at this rate. It's only fair to tell you that the estate shrank on a rigid appraisalment of Mr. Farley's property. The million the newspapers mentioned has dwindled to about eight hundred thousand. If you give away all that's mentioned in those wills and start this girls' home, you won't be able to keep more than three automobiles for yourself."

"Oh, the proof of the pudding is in the eating—and I know it's good!" Nan laughed. "I stuffed myself so long with-

out thinking about my hungry neighbors that it won't hurt me to pass the plate down the table!"

"Well, the main thing," said Thurston, "is to get your assurance that you'll accept the estate under your rights as Mr. Farley's adopted daughter. I suppose we can't prevent your giving it away—without having you declared insane!"

"I dare you to try it!" Then, more serious than at any time during the interview, she said: "You'll have to let me reason it out my own way. It was only a piece of luck that I wasn't thrown into an orphan asylum or left to die on the river-bank when the Farleys gave me a home. I shall never forget that—never again," she added with deep feeling. "The least I can do is to pass my good luck on. I've thought all that out, so please don't make me talk of it any more!"

Then as the men rose to leave, Fanny appeared and urged them to remain to dinner. Thurston pleaded an engagement in town; Eaton said he would stay.

"You've broken that man's heart, Nan," Eaton remarked as Thurston rolled away in his machine.

"What did you do to him, Nancy?" asked Fanny.

"She scared him to death! He's convinced that she's headed for an insane asylum—that's all," chuckled Eaton. "Mere altruism doesn't interest Thurston; he thinks it just a sign of weak character—worse than a weak chin."

"I've always thought," said Fanny, as her arm stole around Nan, "that Nancy has a very nice chin."

"I might go further," Eaton remarked daringly, "and say that the face in its entirety is pleasant and restful to look at!"

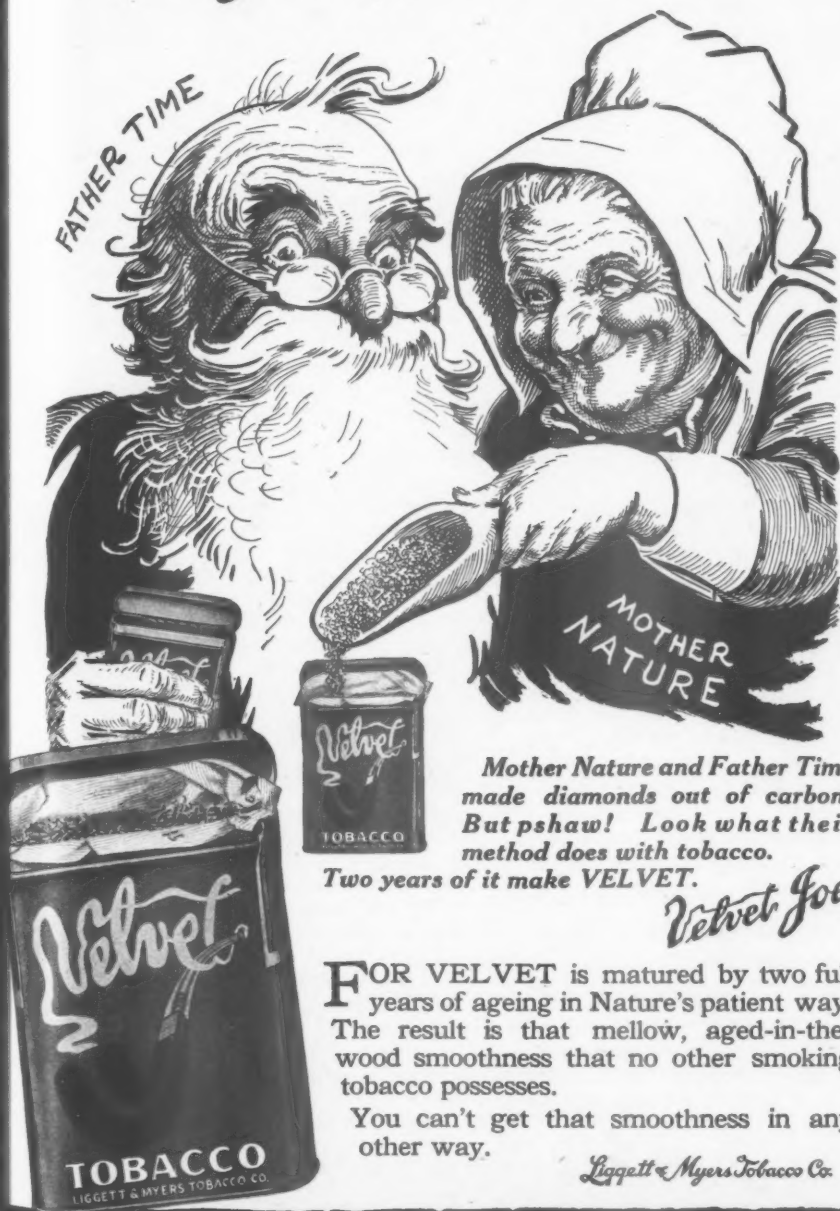
"Stop teasing me!" cried Nan, "or I'll run out to the barn and cry."

THEY were still talking in this strain when Copeland's machine appeared in the driveway.

"I didn't tell you that we're having a party to-night," said Fanny. "Unless I'm mistaken Mr. Amidon is driving that machine."

She walked to the veranda rail and

Velvet Joe's Able Assistants--



The illustration depicts two anthropomorphic figures: Father Time on the left, an old man with a long white beard and glasses, and Mother Nature on the right, an old woman in a hooded cloak. Mother Nature is pouring tobacco from a small tin into a larger tin labeled 'Velvet TOBACCO'. A large tin of 'Velvet TOBACCO' is in the foreground. The text 'FATHER TIME' is written above the old man, and 'MOTHER NATURE' is written on Mother Nature's cloak.

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looked expectantly toward the approaching car. Though Billy had lately paid one other visit to the farm, Nan had not met him. Fanny, with her usual frankness, had warned Nan of the expected visit, and Nan had carefully kept out of the way. She had not seen Billy since the night he proposed the destruction of Farley's will.

Copeland jumped from the machine and ran up the steps while Jerry disposed of the car. He shook hands with Fanny and then turned toward Nan inquiringly.

She was already walking toward him.

"I'm glad to see you, Billy."

"I'm glad to see you, Nan," he said and added in a slightly lower tone, "I'm glad to see you *here*."

"And I'm glad to see you—here!"

Each knew what was in the other's thoughts. Copeland bowed slightly and crossed to Eaton, who was gazing fixedly at the piled-up glories of the sunset.

Jerry, in a gray suit, and the very tallest collar he could buy, now added himself to the group. He bent over Mrs. Copeland's hand with his best imitation of Eaton's manner and then, as he raised his head, looked round furtively to see whether his mentor was watching him.

The laughter that greeted this had the effect of putting them all at ease.

"I knew Jerry could do it," said Nan, "but I didn't suppose he would dare try it in his Cecil's presence."

"I don't know what you're talking about," remarked Eaton, feigning indignation at their treatment of his protégé. "If you're not satisfied with Jeremiah's manners we'll both go home."

Nan ran away to change her clothes and reappeared just as dinner was announced.

"Just sit wherever you happen to be," said Fanny, as they reached the dining-room; and then as they sat down she bit her lip and colored, finding that it fell to Copeland's lot to sit opposite her. Eaton, noticing her embarrassment, immediately charged Copeland Farms with responsibility for the high cost of living.

"You must watch Nan carefully, Mrs. Copeland. She's grinding the faces of the poor. I heard Mrs. Harrington complaining bitterly last night about the

price she has to pay for such trifling necessities as eggs and butter. You're going to bring a French Revolution on this country if you're not careful. And there will be eggs thrown that don't bear the Copeland Farm's stamp."

"I refuse to have this suit spoiled with any other kind," Jerry protested. "Speaking of eggs—"

"No you don't!" Nan interrupted.

"You can't tell any of your country-hotel egg stories here. I refuse to hear them."

"All right, then. I've got a new one anyhow. I was shaking hands with old friends on the lower Wabash last week and struck three slabs of cocoanut pie in three days. I'm going to make a map of the pie habits of the Hoosiers and use it to advertise Copeland-Farley—the old reliable drug-house. I've been all over the State lately and I've never found chopped cocoanut north of Logansport, and you never find it east of Seymour going south. Down along the Ohio you can stand on hotel porches in the peach season and see thousands of acres of peaches spoiling on the trees, and you go inside and find dried-peach pie on the program. And you have to eat it or take sliced bananas or hard chunks of canned pineapple. No wonder traveling men go wrong! I wonder at times at my own pure life!"

It was clear that they all liked Jerry. They encouraged him to talk and he passed lightly from Praxiteles, whom he had just discovered in a magazine article, to the sinfulness of the cut-price drug-store, which he pronounced the greatest of commercial iniquities.

AFTER coffee on the veranda Eaton quietly disappeared. Then Jerry and Nan went off for a stroll, leaving Copeland and Fanny together.

"I guess that's coming out all right," remarked Jerry, indicating the veranda with a wave of his straw hat. "But it's tough on Cecil. I've been wondering whether *she* knows how it's going to hit him."

"Oh, I hope not! But that's something we'll never know."

"Of course Cecil needn't have done all the things he did to bring them together again. He might have let the boss go by



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the board. It wasn't just money that saved the boss; it was John Cecil's strong right arm!"

"And yours too, Jerry! Oh, yes; I know more about it than you think I do. You helped—you did a lot to save him."

"Well, if I did," he admitted grudgingly, "that was Cecil, too. I'd been busy rustling for myself—never caring a hang for the other fellow—till Cecil got hold of me. I've wondered a good deal how he did it—a scrub like me!"

"Don't be foolish, Jerry; it had to be in you first. But he does make people want to be different. He's certainly affected me that way."

"Oh, you!" he exclaimed disdainfully.

"Well, don't you ever think I'm proud of myself, Jeremiah Amidon!"

She paused abruptly at the edge of a brook that tinkled musically on its way to the river. "I'm only just beginning to try to be self-respecting and decent and useful; I think it's going to be a lot of fun if I ever get started."

"Well, I hope to see you on the cars sometimes. I've got the same ticket but I'm not sure it's good on the limited. I'm likely to be chucked at the first tank."

They jumped the brook and followed a cow-path across a broad pasture, talking of old times on the Ohio, and of Farley, of whom Jerry always spoke in highest reverence, and then of his own prospects.

Both were subdued by the influences of the night. The stars hung near; it seemed to Jerry that they had stolen closer to earth to enfold Nan in their soft radiance. A new idea had possessed him of late. His heart throbbed with it to-night.

"In a place like this," he began slowly, "you think a lot of things that wouldn't strike you anywhere else."

"It's just the dear country lonesomeness. I come out here often in the evenings—used to in the winter, when the snow was deepest. I love all this." She stretched out her arms with a quick gesture to comprehend the star-hung fields.

Jerry's dejection increased. The more he saw of Nan the less he seemed to count in her affairs. A Nan who tramped

snowy fields and took counsel of the heavens was beyond his reach—immeasurably beyond.

"I don't take hold of things the way you do, Nan. Being out here just makes me lonesome, that's all. I've got to be where I can see electric signs spelling words on tall buildings. Just hearing that trolley tooting away over there helps some; must be because it's going toward the lights."

"If you feel so terribly maybe we'd better go back!" she said tauntingly and took a step backward.

"Don't do that again! If you leave me here in the dark I'll be scared to death."

"That *would* be a blow to mankind," she mocked.

"Well, I've had blows enough!"

"You hide the scars well—I can say that!" she flung back.

"Listen, Nan—"

"I thought Cecil had broken you of the 'Listen' habit."

"Forget it! You know perfectly well what I want to tell you!"

"Then why do we linger? We really must go!"

"My business is selling goods and it's a rule of the game never to let a customer turn his back on you."

"All right; you go first!"

"Nan,"—he drew nearer and planted himself in her path,—*"you can't go—not till I've promised to marry you!"*

This reversal of a long-established formula evoked a gay laugh; but she did not attempt to pass him.

"I meant to ask you the day you moved out here, but I was afraid you'd marry me for my money! I want to be loved for myself alone! And don't think I'd be mentioning it now if I wasn't so lonesome I could cry! And if you're going to take that money it's all off anyhow. I'm not going to have anybody question my motives. As far as loving you's concerned, I started full time that first day we met on the river-bank, when you pulled my fly out of the tree. I might just as well have told you then—and I wish I had!"

"Well, you needn't scold me about it now!"

"I'm not scolding. I'm just telling you what you missed!"

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She clung to him, crying as he kissed away her tears. The touch of her wet cheek thrilled him.

"Why don't you give me another chance? I know I'm only a poor working girl—"

"Nan, I wish you were that!" he cried earnestly. "But all that money's coming to you now. I wouldn't have the nerve—"

"It would be the first time your nerve ever failed!" Then, fearing she had wounded him, she added quickly: "Of course I didn't mean that."

"Nan!"

"Well, don't cry, little boy!"

"Nan!"

"Yes, Jerry."

"I love you, Nan!" he said gently.

"I wish you cared even a little bit."

"It's a good deal more than that, Jerry."

He took her hands and kissed them.

"Nan, this doesn't seem right, you being you; and you know what I am!"

"I think I know what you are, Jerry—fine and loyal and good!"

"I'm going to try to be," he said humbly.



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"And you've helped me more than I could make you understand, from that very first day when I hated myself so! You brought back the old days; everything that has happened since has made me think of you. You were the only person around here who really knew all about me—just what I came from. And it helped me to see how bravely you were fighting your own way up. I had the chance forced on me that you made for yourself. And I made a mess of everything! Oh, Jerry!"

She clung to him, crying as he kissed away her tears. The touch of her wet cheek thrilled him.....

"We mustn't be so happy we can't remember other people," she said as they loitered hand in hand toward the house.

"I guess that's the only way, Nan. That's what Cecil's always saying. And I guess he's right about everything."

Eaton passed them unconscious of their nearness. He walked with head erect as one who has fought and won a good fight. A sense of all his victory had cost him was in both their hearts. There was an infinite pathos in his figure as he strode through the dusk, returning to the woman he loved and to the man he had saved and given back to her.

"It's tough on Cecil," said Jerry chokingly. "It doesn't seem quite square, some way."

"Well, we may be sure he doesn't feel that way," Nan answered. "It's all come out the way he wanted it to. He brought them together."

"It's funny, Nan; but I'm never dead sure I catch Cecil's drift—the scheme or whatever it is he works by. I can't find it in the books he gives me to read."

"It isn't in books, Jerry; it's in his heart—just helping, just being kind!"

T H E E N D

The Journey for the Dream

THE story of a sentimental young Irishman and the Rose of The World he found at Fort Félice.

By Nan Moulton

THERE was Brian O'Beirne, outward bound from Winnipeg, ready for love

and luck.

In the averted, boyish face of him, a-stare through the car window at lush grass burning with red-brown lilies, flew a something small and hard and sharp, flew and stung. At the brown-booted feet of him something struck with a faintly musical ring. From the dusty car floor something gleamed, small and yellow. Then he held in a curious hand a quaint gold medal inscribed:

ILLUSTRATED
IN SILHOUETTE
BY FREDERICK
RICHARDSON

Cymodocée d'Aville.
From the Convent of the
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For efficiency in the ménage.

The fates were good to him, after all, in this new guise of a wash-out.

The little French girl leaned across the aisle with distressed eyes, a hinting pink beneath the creamy pallor of her cheeks. He gave the medal into her curving palm. "I have much sorrow, Monsieur," she told him softly. "There is blood, yes, on your countenance. The medal stays on my chain. I have a mortal ennui on this train that never prome-

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nades itself further, and I swing the chain in impatience, but yes, impatience, and the medal fly at you. And the blood!" She shivered.

"It is just a scratch," he laughed, and held a handkerchief to the awesome gore so that it was gone. "But I have a mortal ennui, too; bored blue on this infernal train that never promenades itself further. May I come and talk to you? I know your name from that so-blessed medal. Mine is Brian O'Beirne. I may come?"

"You may have still a mortal ennui," she warned him. "Your words—I do not know all—you speak so *vite*, so queeck. You name the train 'infer-r-rnal,'"—her *r's* blurred and caught deliciously. "What ees it, that 'infer-r-rnal,' say?"

"Something to apologize for. I am sorry."

"But what ees it, 'infer-r-rnal'?" she insisted.

"A term of opprobrium," he explained gravely.

"One more so-beeg word, and *rr's* so much," she sighed. "I can never know English. It is very heavy."

IT may rain alike on the just and the unjust. The town of McMaster was sure that it was the Just who had inherited the Deluge. A meek bit of a creek that flowed around the embryo prairie town had taken base advantage of an augmented and unaccustomed power to wash out two culverts, one north and one south of the baby town, leaving several feet of track cobwebbed across gaping, brown wounds. McMaster thrilled ecstatically in the throes of an Episode. A pile-driver wrought in massive wise. The wrinkle-browed section-bosses owned creation. And back to the south of the southern washout, where the little tri-weekly passenger-train was sitting tight in a world of lush grass and burning lilies, Brian O'Beirne and Cymodocée d'Aville, young eye afire to young eye a-droop, were starting elemental forces to cause more serious wash-outs under the cobwebbed way of a planned life.

It was the odd, dim fairness of her hair that had at first held Brian. The brown lashes shaded darker eyes. The pointed, little face was olive-tinted over

its colorless creaminess. And then, above the cream and the olive and the brown, where one would have expected the color-scheme to end in soft black, there was that astonishing hair, absolutely straight, simply pompadoured, with a great fair braid crowning the mass. But such a fairness! In no wise gold. Ah, it was light moonlight, dead, soft moonlight, when the world is drugged and still. Moonlight hair!

In vain did Brian, gently bred, drag his eyes away to the lush grass and the lilies aflame. In vain did he join the conductor in comforting the bewildered foreigners in the other coach, where they gesticulated much and held close together. In vain did he deplore the frantic confusion of the chaos of baggage tumbled beside the track, heavy trunks and light express parcels, hats and consignments of eggs, buried in the lush grass and crushing the brave lilies. "*Que voulez-vous?*" shrugged the news-agent at him. He hated that news-agent, anyway, who, because he was a news-agent, might speak to the lady of the moonlight hair, professionally, as one might say, and who, because he was French, carried the racial appeal among alien folk whose speech was "heavy." So Brian glowered at the "*Que voulez-vous?*" of the frayed-by-life news-agent, and went back to lose his boyhood in the astonishing fair hair of the convent-fragrant girl whose medal so appropriately smote him as he once more averted his eyes to that confounded lush grass and those cursedly burning brown lilies.

Again came the soft insistence of her sweet, slow speech: "'Infer-r-rnal'—I do not arrive at knowing that word. I have been making my education at the convent there. I will make my education now. 'Infer-r-rnal,' yes?"

So Brian laughed at his own defeat and tugged at his buried moderns.

"I think," he told her, "you, if you were a forgetful newspaper man too, might call this train '*maudit*.'"

Her bubble of laughter held satisfied understanding.

"I like him, that word '*maudit*.' And you say 'infer-r-rnal.' He is of a difficulty. But he is good for this train that goes no more. Are they shockin', these

words, say then?" Her gravity was nearly the undoing of Brian's. "But they so march with this wash-out, 'maudit,' 'infer-r-rnal.'"

Brian was beginning to think of quite different adjectives for the train and the wash-out, but he chuckled at her grave justification of the words, and he hailed an understanding spirit.

"Do you know," he announced in a Columbus voice, "I feel just like that about words, too. Words are so *living*. All words are wonderful. Some words thump, and some words swagger, and some words sing, and some words hold color like a field of poppies, and some words have the perfume of a briar-rose or the scent of the mold of an autumn woods, and some words are brave, and all are proud, and none are profane, and all are mighty of God. But, Glory Kelly, listen to me!" Brian hit the earth again. "You see, Mademoiselle, I live for words. I am going one day to be a real journalist like my dad. That's why I was so rude to this held-up train. There's a big 'story' waiting up the line for my gifted scratch-pad."

"Tell me more, then," she commanded, with a wave of her expressive hands.

"Dad, you see, is Main Guy on a sheet back in Winnipeg—"

"*Tenez, Monsieur, tenez! I know them not, your quelques petits mots.*" Her piquant face reproached him.

"Alas, my journalese!" mourned Brian. "'Dad'—you know that."

"But yes." The silky head nodded in relief. "But yes. The agent of the station have one boy of much smallness who call him 'Daddee.' They go one night up the track to hoe the potato. The dark begin to come and the coyote lift his nose and—and—what you call—'yelp.' 'Yelp,' a so-ugly sharp word, but also a so-ugly sharp sound. The coyote yelp and the *bébé* Tommee cry tears and say, 'Oh, Daddee, O-o-oh Daddee, do you desire not *le bon Dieu* make but a unique wolf?'" Her long eyes darkened to Tommy's terror, and some new, tumultuous pulse quickened and beat in Brian's throat.

But he smiled at her tale. "A unique wolf?" he puzzled a moment. "Oh, just

one, you mean. I see. Well, we have sufficiently demonstrated 'dad.' 'Main guy' is barbaric reporter's phrase for editor-in-chief, and 'sheet' is newspaper. Clear sailing?"

"Quite!" she assured him in a staid English manner. He had an instantaneous vision of one preceptress of the convent.

So he told her of the accident away up the line where the Italians had been killed by a falling embankment. He was going to find where the fault lay and tell the facts in his father's famous paper. He told her of his work back in the city, the excitements, the revelings, the fun and the pain. He told her of the year before him when he would go to get a line on the "game" in Europe and Asia, the blurring of old geographical lines and political divisions, the shattering of established orders, the upward beating of the pulses of nations—Gee, it was great!

And Cymodocée, her pale, pointed, little face cupped in a delicate hand, sat drinking him up, him and his words. A protest at the flowers of his eloquence sometimes, a whimsy of speech capping a fancy of his own, but mostly silence, silence and eyes. He was well worth silence and eyes, this Brian, so voluble and vivid of word. He stood so straight to his six feet and three-quarters of an inch. His width of shoulder was proportionate. He looked so straight out at you, too. Often he seemed grave for twenty-six. But when a smile that you knew was his mother's came into his smudged-blue eyes, and broke up his young gravity, and sweetened his eager mouth, it was bad to be a woman, for it was the most soul-engaging, heart-crumpling smile. For the rest, his dark hair was brushed back in some queer way from his brow to his neck, and his voice was a mellow baritone with that odd, confident, young-Canadian accent to its clear English, that crinkles a Canadian's heart returning after many years in soft-voiced countries.

Suddenly he was showing her his mother's miniature, and suddenly the train was moving.

"This infernal train is going on," he gasped in protest, "and you get out—?"

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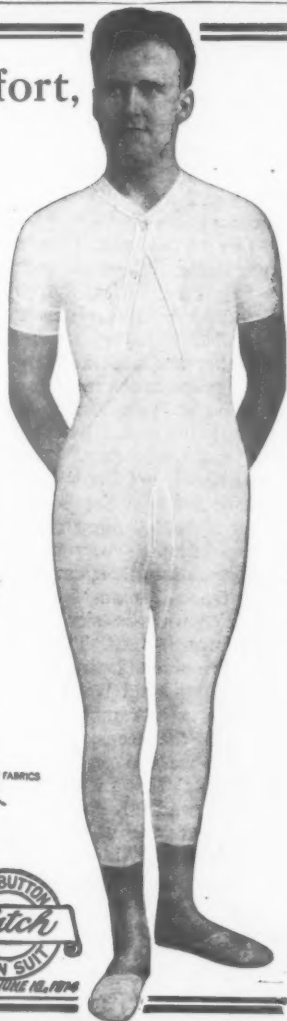
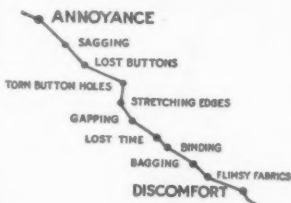
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"At McMaster." And she didn't laugh at the manifest injustice to that long-suffering train.

"And I've been talking, talking, all about myself—"

"The men—" Her flicker of laughter came and went. "It is *bien entendu*. By consequence—"

"By consequence I know nothing but your name. Where do you go?"

"To Fort Félice, the old fort of the Company of the Hudson Bay on the Assiniboine, to my sister who is there with her husband, and my brother who is the priest at the mission of St. Pierre."

"You go on a visit?"

"It is my home. I have made my education. I go to stay."

They were out now on the dark little platform where the population of McMaster thrilled anew as the Episode on its evolutionary way poured a jostling multitude into their curious midst. There was the tall man-of-the-world looking *au fait* with whatever vagaries of whatever branch-lines. There were nonchalant drummers lazily smoking and still comparing hotel lacks in the new West. There was a "bunch of boys," scattered through the teens, heavy on sarcasm: "S'pose we can *paddle* the rest of the way now." There were pretty girls, tired babies, wadded foreigners, a tearful bride and the ubiquitous land-seeker. Suddenly a shrill, shepherd's-plaid cloak embraced Cymodocée.

"Oh, Cymodocée, you darling, it is so good to have you. We have been so worried. Madame is up at the boarding-house. We can't get anywhere. And the children can't get across the creek for school. . . . Oh, *how* do you do, Mr. O'Beirne? You *did* say O'Beirne, Cymodocée? Have you had a ghastly time there waiting? No? The *view* was beautiful? What can he mean, Cymodocée? Oh, the lilies? You are new to the prairie, then?"

She dragged Edouard from some smudge of blackness behind her.

"Here is Edouard, Cymodocée!"

Cymodocée gave him a listless hand. Edouard, in the blink of light from the station-lamp, showed rather handsome in a florid French way, seemed not quite at ease in a new gray suit, and hung on

Cymodocée's few words with adoring eyes.

But the last hand-car was about to creak up the line with the hapless baggage, and the procession of passengers was already at the front. "Fort Félice," Brian whispered, "St. Pierre. You will let me see you there?"

The disturbing hair was peeping from a demure, black turban. The arresting quality of her voice shook him as he stood, his dark head bared under the wide glimmer of stars. But she only said, as if just awakened, a bit startled, "But surely, I will see you again," and to herself, when he had gone, more awake, a bit frightened, "Oh, but surely, I *will* see him again?"

Then her empty hands went groping blindly through the empty blackness after him, till suddenly they were caught warm and close, while Brian dared a last second from the creaking car.

"Cymodocée, *who* is Edouard?"

Cymodocée shrugged a shoulder. "Edouard?" she said petulantly. "Why, Edouard is but my fiancé."

BRIAN O'BEIRNE, pondering love and luck, sat in the meager shade of the bushes dotted parkwise along the twisted, turgid Assiniboine. Across the river the tents of the railway construction camp gleamed in the hot August sunlight. Off in the Reserve the Sioux church stood white in the glare. What was it he had heard? Something about there being a Ladies' Aid among the Sioux squaws. He must write that to the Mater. And there was the tale of the old Red Cloud for the Dad, the story of the old chief who wore his paint and feathers and shot his arrows among the rose-tangles along the river, while every other last Indian of his tribe hoed and sang hymns. Those were grand arrow-heads the men had dug from that old mound the day before, flint in rose and jet. Then he was on his feet, panama swept to his side, trembling right to his heart.

"God is very good to me," he breathed. "How lovely she is!"

Up the twisted path from the river's edge, past the dust of warehouses and docks and the old powder-magazine, she



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you don't need to
mention the name
Just ask for
the best cigarette





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moved, all golden in the golden sunlight. Her incredible hair was piled high on her dainty head like some proud, folded flower. A bizarre little frock, all yellow, silken, high-waisted, short-

he is an *ennui*, that Jacques; he is of a youngness; his character is not poised."

Brian was still looking like prayers. "You are like a golden daffodil, Cymodocée," he marveled.

"Daffodils do not bloom in August, Monsieur."

"Brian," he prompted.

"Monsieur Bree-an," she smiled. "To-day is everyone gone to the town: my sister Thérèse and her husband to buy what lacks for the feast, driving in the



sleeved, round-throated, clung against the soft, curved youth of her. Little gold sandals caught her ankles. A fluffy bit of a golden sunshade floated between the pale glimmer of her hair and the August sun. A water-spaniel with a bow of wide yellow satin on his curly neck followed her. Under one hand rested the soft head of a young deer, his nubs of horns garlanded with golden bows.

She met him sedately, the vague pink hinting beneath the creamy olive of her cheeks, the long, dark eyes widening under the shading lashes.

"It is then Monsieur?"

"Brian," he prompted.

"Monsieur Bree-an," she echoed. "Say then, you Bijou, to the Monsieur, how we welcome him to Fort Félice. And thou, Jacques, bark thy greeting. Ah,

barouche of gray velours. My brother, he visits in the Mission a man who dies. Edouard, he drives my sister, for Maurice has an illness. I am alone. In one big trunk we bring from France—we are Normandes—I find them, the little robe of gold, the so-funny shoes, the sunshade and the ribbons of silk and of satin. We array ourselves, the little

Bijou, the *mauvais* Jacques and this foolish Cymodocée. In Normandy there was once a Cymodocée of the hair fair. We stand by her picture, we dress in her clothes, we coif the hair as hers, and we come out into the sun. And, behold, Monsieur!" Mischief sparkled through the demure joy of her.

"What feast?" Brian asked in foreboding.

"Edouard and me—we marry ourselves to-morrow," she said calmly.

"Why?" Brian gazed steadily and unseeingly at the construction tents over the river. His voice was toneless.

"Why? Why does one marry? See you then: I am of the age suitable. Michel, we make of him the priest. He come here to the Mission. Maurice take the farm and Edouard manage. Thérèse, she keep the ménage. And me, I make my education. Now, Michel, he go away North for many years to the Indians. Maurice, he have the big illness, and Thérèse take him to have—how you say?—operation. Edouard buy the farm, and the money will pay *Monsieur le Docteur* and the *hôtel-Dieu* and after. Here then am I. Behold the difficulty. Thérèse has an anxiety supreme. Edouard desires that we marry ourselves. *A la bonheur!* says Thérèse. *Dieu merci!* says Michel. Maurice says nothing, being fatigued. *Voilà!*"

"Do you love Edouard, Cymodocée?" Brian's exult-

ant voice claimed a negative.

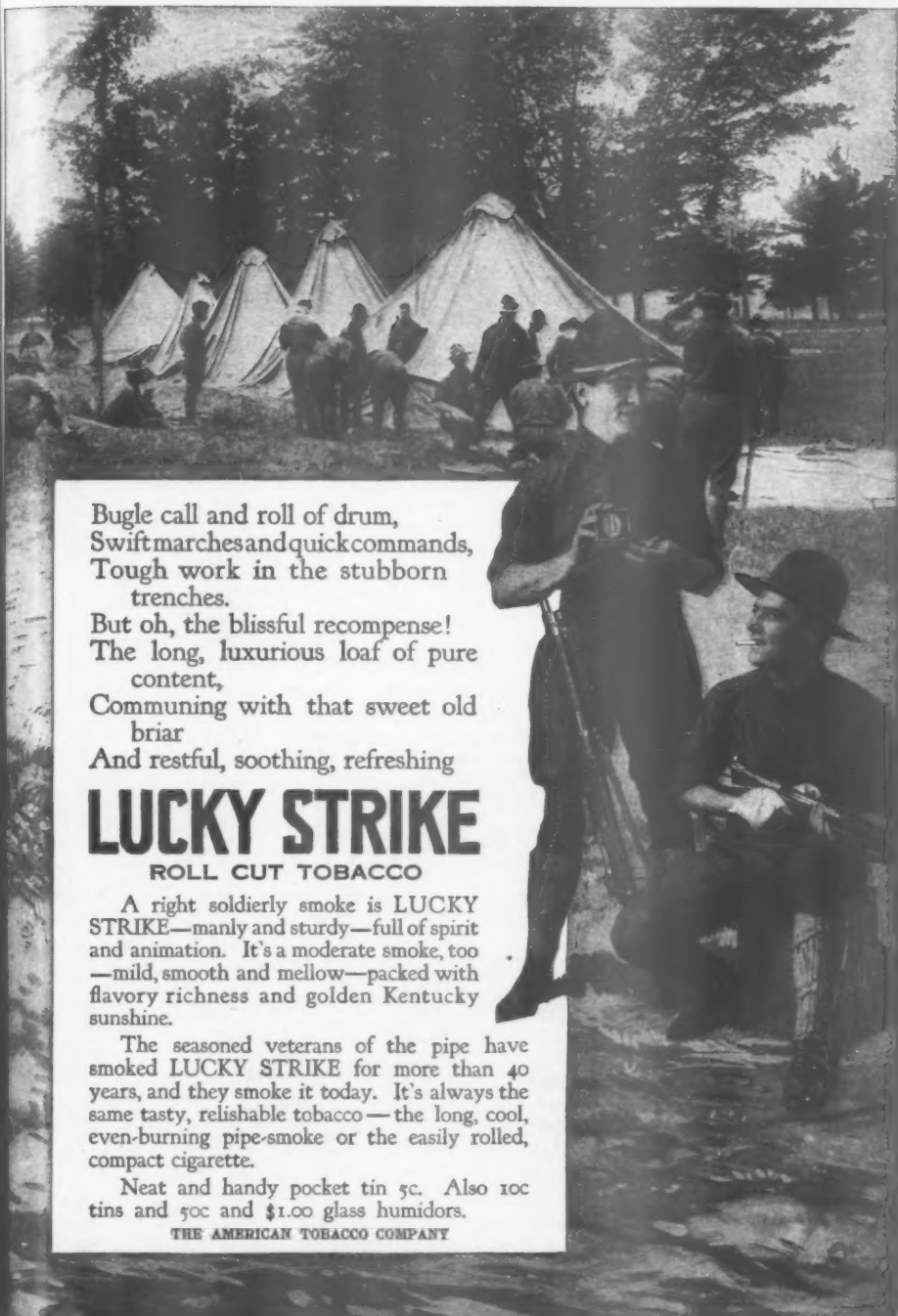
But Cymodocée frowned at him. "Love? I do not know that. Thérèse did not tell me of that. In the convent they did not teach me. Edouard has not said it. I do not like him, that word."

"Cymodocée —"

Brian's voice was hesitant, but the tone dogged—and Brian, the lover of sweet words, the apostle of grace and suavity of phrase, chokily fal-



Then terror quenched the glow of her eyes, and for the third time her hands went groping blindly.



Bugle call and roll of drum,
Swift marches and quick commands,
Tough work in the stubborn
trenches.

But oh, the blissful recompense!
The long, luxurious loaf of pure
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THE AMERICAN TOBACCO COMPANY

tered a raw and crude and desperate: "Has Edouard ever kissed you, Cymodocée?"

"Of a certainty, no! Say no more follies, Monsieur. Almost I wish you had not come. You have not said—?"

And Brian, scorning himself for the naked awkwardness of his asking, and catching the trouble in her voice, was glad to come lightly back to the commonplace. "Oh, I am writing up the new railway, and life in construction camps, on my way back from the disaster up the line. I'm your neighbor over the river. Wont you show me your old fort?"

So they wandered over the wide topaz plain, aglow with the blue fire of harebells, to a moss-grown ruin that was once a fort. And she told him what she had heard of the tepees that had once covered the sand, of the Indian dances and the making of braves. There were only "half-bloods" now—her tone contemptuous. And she told him of the Red River carts—see, the grasses waved even now in the cuts of the old trail,—of the trappers and traders and soldiers and mounted police.

And always she felt him so troubling.

They had lunch in what had been the factor's house, a solid, rough-cast structure, the huge Scotch fireplace his one memory in an atmosphere of Old France and other worldliness, brass candles and Catholic saints and French literature. They went out again, past the tall, isolated chimney, white in the sun-beat in a field of stubble, and into the popular bluff where were the unmarked graves of the days that had been, the mounds, big and little, blurring back to prairie sod.

And all day the trouble in Cymodocée's eyes deepened, and the disturbance of Brian in her grew and grew.

When the sun's rays shot level across the plain, they were bending over the heavy books of the Company, piled tier on tier in the thick dust of forgetfulness in the store-loft. A certain day-book gave them entertainment. South Quill and South Quill's son-in-law and Yellow Calf's eldest son got bacon and flour and tea "on account of treaty." The Old Scrubbing Wife, on the same account, got a hoe, tobacco and cash for the fer-

ryman. Louison Onsoupe was debtor for two hundred and ninety-six dollars and forty-seven cents at one date, his purchases ranging from scalping-knives to castor-oil. Shee Sheep brought in "1 cross fox \$2.50, 2 prime red do. \$2.50, and 1 common red fox \$.50," and took away a Balmoral skirt, one Wincy shirt, gun-flints and tobacco. Alex McIntosh banged a prospective saxepece for a "can of soda." "*Pâtisseries*," Cymodocée was positive. "Here's a gay R. N. W. M. P. getting '1 white dressed shirt and collar—detached,'" Brian commented. And they lifted from the day-book eyes smiling each at the other over the gay policeman.

But the careless smile suddenly faded from Brian's face and his smudged-blue eyes went ablaze in a face all at once very white. And the careless smile vanished as completely from Cymodocée's face and her long, dark eyes were wide and awed, staring still and straight into the blaze of Brian's. Her ivory, pointed little face in its pale blossoming of hair seemed to float up towards Brian through the golden dust of the loft. And irresistibly, slowly, irrevocably, Brian bent through the glamour of the dust, golden in the level rays of the sun, bent until his eager lips had gathered in the sweetness of the scarlet flower of her mouth, and the ivory face in its pale blossoming of hair floated away again through the wavering, golden dust of the loft, and the world went around in a strange, sweet, reeling madness.

When an unsteadfast world steadied again, Cymodocée, frightened, was holding out groping hands to him. "What is it?" She shook in his grasp like a lily at dawn. "Oh, what is it that it is?"

"It is love, Cymodocée, *love!*" Some quality of chant was in his baritone voice. "Now you understand it—*love?*"

Her head drooped like a lily at dusk. "Now," she said, "is it better understood."

But out in the tranquil beauty of the evening, sitting at her feet on the stone steps of the factor's house, Brian was having troubles of his own. Cymodocée loved him, she must marry him. But Cymodocée was fiancée to Edouard; it was a thought that smote him in the

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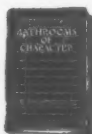
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heart; the feast was to-morrow; Thérèse and Maurice were even now coming from the town. Very well, then. Brian was going away in a week to Thibet and Armenia. And he wanted Cymodocée

"You talk follies. I *must* see you always."

"Of course," he assented, "and so you must marry me. Now, listen, there's a friend of mine at Wemyss, a padre, the finest chap in God's West, with a wife whose price is above rubies. You can ride? Of course, I met your pony this afternoon. Then we will go now before the others get back and ball up the self-evident plans of the Almighty. Hamilton will marry us. And to-morrow you will come with me to Winnipeg to my mother and dad and get ready for Thibet next week. Wrap a cloak about you while I saddle the ponies."

"It tears me the heart. How may a d'Aville break a promise?"



"Do you love Edouard, Cymodocée?" Brian's exultant voice claimed a negative. But Cymodocée frowned at him. "Love? I do not know that. Therese did not tell me of that. In the convent they did not teach me. Edouard has not said it. I do not like him, that word."

with him to see the ancient cedars and the burnished fields and the cyclamens in bloom. Her eyes glowed. But if she married Edouard, she would stay at Fort Félice with the half-bloods and the dusty books and the blurring graves. Michel would be gone North to the Indians and Thérèse and Maurice to the operation. And she would never, never see Brian again. Then terror quenched the glow of her eyes, and for the third time her hands went groping blindly until his caught and steadied them. A sob tore at her throat.

"Oh, but surely I *will* see you again.

"You do not love Edouard. It was—how do you say it—a marriage of—convenience. When you love one man, that kind of marriage—with another is breaking the promise of your heart and your love. The other is just spoiling the plans of your relatives. You must think of yourself and myself now."

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"I will go into penitence, then, for Edouard, oh, much penitence. And thou, I supplicate of thee—" The slow, sweet voice shook and halted. "I will be all alone—" the voice broke and stopped.

Brian took her face gently in his two hands and looked long and steadily into the wistful darkness of her eyes. Then very gravely and very tenderly and very reverently he kissed her on her broad, pale forehead between her sweet, dark brows.

"Cymodocée," he said, "when you know my mother, you will understand that I must be good always to all women. And you—"

And Cymodocée, the wistfulness of her eyes drowned in an answering sweetness, suddenly caught down his dark, velvety head tight against her golden shoulder, whispered an "I adore you, I adore you," into his astonished ear, and fled for her cloak, while Brian lifted his heart-crumpling smile to a scented, darkening, wonderful world, and went for the horses.

IT was midnight at Wemyss. The padre and his lady leaned over their gate, loath to leave the cool, quiet, perfumed, glimmering out-of-doors. It was their very own Eden they had cleared in the center of a poplar bluff, with a charming home-made bungalow in the midst.

A rhythm of hoofs broke the dreaming quiet, and two horses stopped at the edge of the poplar bluff.

"Ohé!" rang cheerily to the dreamers at the gate.

"Ohé yourself! And who goes there?" challenged the padre.

"Friend."

"Advance, Friend, and give cause why you ride abroad in so witching a world."

A baritone laugh rang across the glimmering space. Then the padre started from his lounging.

"It's not—?" His hand was at the latch.

"Not Brian O'Beirne?" His lady was ahead of him with the question and through the gate. But the horses had come up.

"That same," agreed Brian.

"But what—?" began the padre.

"—are you doing here—?" his lady was ahead again.

"—now?" finished the padre.

"I came to be married," said Brian. "I found the Rose of the World, the Golden Rose of all the World, at Fort Félice—"

"Still lyric, Brian. But it's not—?" He turned to the brown pony.

"Not Cymodocée?" finished the lady, catching the girl in her arms as she slipped to the ground.

"That same," bubbled Cymodocée in piquant mockery.

"But why this way? And why just now?" The padre achieved a complete sentence, for his lady was mothering the girl.

"The Rose was to be gathered tomorrow by another hand." Brian was grave.

"Not—?" began the padre.

"Not Edouard?" the lady gasped.

"Yes, Edouard." Brian was graver.

"We'll go for a license, then, and you tell me the rest on the way. Ruth will take care of Cymodocée."

"A license? I don't want a *license*. I want you to *marry* us," protested Brian.

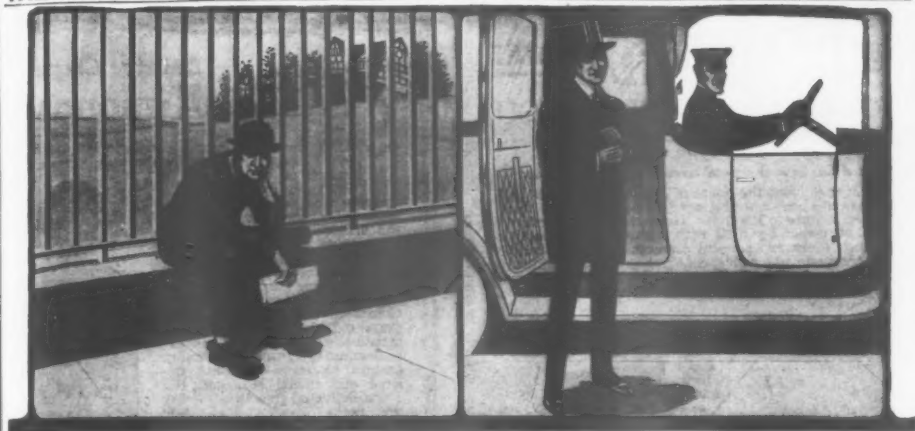
"First the law, son, and then the church. You come and pay a paternal government a fee and receive a written permission for the church to do its worst."

"But, Padre, marriage is a Sacrament—what has a J. P. to do with a Sacrament?"

"Not much, you'll think, after you've seen old Eliphalet," smiled the padre.

So, talking, they came to a house asleep behind a rose-broidered hedge of silver wolf-willow, and made much noise. At last, as Brian later told the tale, "an old gargoyle with seven leagues of whiskers put an ancient head and some of the whiskers out of a window, and drowsily demanded a reason. 'Gar boy!' he muttered finally as he got a light, a pen and a pair of horn spectacles, 'Gar boy! it's fair disgustin'." Then he asked me such impertinent questions that only awe at his great and odious antiquity kept me from throwing him into his own hedge of wolf-willow, but the padre made me tell, and we

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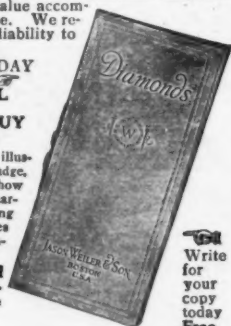
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came away with his precious paper and a 'Gar boy!' wheezed after us as he tried to shut the door on a quarter-section of beard."

All through the solemn, beautiful, sacred, poignant service, the quality of chant throbbed in Brian's voice, the uplift of a Sacrament was on his grave, young face, the ineffable tenderness of the lover in his smudged-blue eyes and around his grave, young mouth. And through all the solemn, beautiful, sacred, poignant service, the lovely little ivory face of Cymodocée was lifted steadily to Brian, the sweet, slow voice strangely accenting the ritual, the long, dark eyes awed again, but unafraid.

Then the lady Ruth was intent upon hospitality. The horses must rest longer, anyway, she claimed. The padre stayed to help the lady. The lovers sat on the steps in the scented, glimmering garden.

"The wife of your priest there," said Cymodocée, "she is of the great heart and of a charm. You would not arrive at knowing her by regarding her."

They glanced in to where Ruth had paused a moment from the hospitable labors to drop a hand into the outstretched hand of her padre. She was not beautiful of face or supple of figure, but strong and fine and wholesome, and around her mouth the

peace of a good woman safely and greatly beloved.

"Me, I have recounted to her of us and of Edouard, of how affairs, fell badly, of how I am desolated and go to make a penitence, of how I tear me the heart if you go to Armenia alone. And she says, 'Repose yourself, Petite. It is the Love, the big, beautiful Love—one can then do nothing,'"

"Love, he is more and more *entendu*, that word?" teased Brian. "You like him now, that word?"

"He is of a beauty, that word. . . ."

A little head of dim gold drooped against his arm. Thrilled, he gathered her in. "Tired, little heart?"

"I must not be tired," she said; "a d'Aville must not be tired while remains a thing to be done."

"You are not a d'Aville now,



The weary voice lifted again. "They are not of our faith, no, but with big minds and big hearts. Michael O'Beirne, in all the dissensions, has been most fair to us Catholics and our Church in his famous paper."

Cymodocée; you are an O'Beirne."

"The measure of the O'Beirne is not more low than that of the d'Avilles?"

He brushed reverent lips against the wonder of her hair.

"Let's hope not, dear. What remains to be done, Lady Daffodil?"

"To tell them—at Fort Félice—we must go."

BUT, at Fort Félice again, at the door of the factor's house, she sheltered in his tightened arms. Then, with a gay, soft, little quaver of a laugh, her hand on the knob, "Behold, a pretty little pot on the fire!" she told him, and they went in.

"Your pretty little pot on the fire doesn't seem to be boiling over yet," whispered Brian.

At the end of the big room, the priest bowed in lassitude against the piano, pain deep-marked in his lean, dark, high-bred face, his eyes lost in the depths of the unlighted hearth as though he followed the man he had just helped to die on his mist-blown journey from world to world. In a long chair, filled with cushions, leaned a pallid ghost of a man, in his body all the weariness of the ages; only his eyes lived and burned below the queer, blanched hair brushed *en brosse* from a high, grave brow. Over him bent a woman of opulent, heroic mold, shining dark braids crowned round and round a noble head, a mother's brooding, a mate's passion, a heart's anguish in the eyes that met those other eyes that lived and burned in the face of a pallid ghost.

Brian dropped his eyes at the revelation of love and pain. "She lived near a temple of love like that, my little Cymodocée," he breathed, "and she did not know!"

"I am come, Thérèse," said Cymodocée quietly. "We are come."

Slowly, with a great sigh, the woman turned. "It is thou, *chérie*?" she said. "We thought you had gone to the Mission for the night. We are so late. Maurice is exhausted. You must help me get him to bed." They were speaking in French.

"Thérèse, do you not see? It—is—it is Monsieur Bree-an O'Beirne, my—my

husband—the monsieur of the washout."

"Let me tell them," urged Brian.

"My sister, she knows not the English. You tell Maurice."

And while Cymodocée quietly told the bewildered Thérèse, and Brian explained proudly to the burning eyes of Maurice, the priest drew nearer with darkening brows, and Edouard, his horses put away, stood silently in the shadow of the door behind the priest, a ring of creamy, fiery opals in his shy palm, a broader band of gold in a pocket next his heart.

"Behold a pretty little pot on the fire!" Madame gestured to her husband.

But Maurice, a momentary glow of life in his pallid face, was half-risen from his cushions, one hand grasping Brian's in a man's clasp of great good welcome, the other resting on the young shoulder.

"He is the son of my old college friend, Michael O'Beirne," he told Thérèse rapidly in French. "We played lacrosse together for the honor of the halls of old St. Boniface. His mother was Clemency Davidson, the toast of the two towns. Cymodocée will be where she belongs and will belong where she will be. God is still good."

The glow passed and he dropped wearily back among his cushions.

"Married?" Michel's voice was bitter.

"A d'Aville married to a Protestant?"

The weary voice lifted again. "They are not of our faith, no, but with big minds and big hearts. Michael O'Beirne, in all the dissensions, has been most fair to us Catholics and our Church in his famous paper."

"One of us! Married by a Protestant priest, a priest with a wife!" The black bitterness of Michel!

"You marry us, then, Father, if it will make you all any happier," suggested Brian. "You wish it, Cymodocée, this marriage in your Church?"

"Please, Bree-an. It is my faith, they are my people, it will make Michel the more happy, and Thérèse, I think. Maurice will not care, being fatigued."

"We're getting married a lot, Cymodocée," Brian smiled at her, when it was over, "but I don't mind how many times I'm married if it's always to you."

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And then Edouard, understanding at last, inarticulate, came blindly from the shadow of the door. The opal ring dropped and rolled to Cymodocée's yellow-sandaled little feet, the broad gold band was flung with some choking curse into Brian's face, but the priest caught the arm when steel flashed, and Edouard and the priest were gone.

"Oh, I am desolated. Things fall more badly. I did not know—I did not mean—I will make another penitence. But—*why* did I?" A light seemed suddenly to shine from the pale, little strained face as she lifted it to Brian. "I love him." And now, looking, Cymodocée suddenly saw at last. "As you, Thérèse, love Maurice, as the lady loved the padre."

Thérèse turned helplessly to the burning eyes of Maurice.

"We none of us escape it, that mad way of loving."

"Do any of us want to?" asked the weary man, with the eyes that lived.

"But does it always grow sorrow, that love there, say thou, Maurice?" And Cymodocée knelt under his hand.

"No, child, sorrow may grow anywhere. Love grows joy, little Cymodocée." What a good ghost, Maurice! "Love grows but joy."

THE gay little flowers awoke on the sand-plains and shook the pink dew-drops out of their eyes at the passing of a quaint, old barouche of gray velours. In the solid house of the Hudson Bay Company factors, faint rose under the hinting dawn, a pallid ghost of a man with burning eyes and a high-hearted woman of heroic mold faced a future certain in pain and strain and uncertain in hope and life. In a bare study where a tortured Christ hung on the wall, a priest with bitter, bottomless eyes prayed for one adrift on his mist-blown journey from world to world. Out on one of the blurring graves in the poplar bluff a man of inarticulate soul buried a stricken face in the soft neck of a young deer to whose nubs of horns clung tatters of a golden garland. But the barouche held a man with the light of the world in his smudged-blue eyes, and a girl with falling, flower-like hair. And

the barouche rolled on past the tan-colored plains into the unfolding of an exquisite morning and the revealing of a world of wild roses, a shy riot of elusive, faint pinks and drifting fragrances.

Brian piled the barouche with them, heaped their tender delicate tintings above the growlings of the mauvais Jacques curled at Cymodocée's feet, filled the girl's arms with a faint-colored, dew-dabbled storm of them, until her falling hair caught in the branches and shook down in a flutter of dim gold over her white dress where the medal for the ménage gleamed. The pale, pointed, lovely, little face, the flower of a mouth laughing a protest, looked out at Brian over the feast of sweet, wild color, so that the tumultuous pulse hammered again in his throat, and the rosy morning reeled around him, and he stumbled to Cymodocée's side in the old barouche and buried his face with a sort of sob in her shaken hair.

"It is just," he said to her brokenly, "just that I'm praising God."

She laid her cheek along the dark velvet of his hair as it mingled with hers.

"And your good friends, the words there?" she asked him with her captivating mischief.

"They are fled," he confessed, and drove on. "It is the miracle of your hair."

"It is a miracle of insomnia—wakefulness, yes—that I have been since the morning of yesterday."

Her sweet, sleepy, trailing voice curled through Brian deliciously till he roused to compunction.

"You poor blessed darling! A day of wooing, a long ride, a midnight wedding, another long ride, another wedding, a packing and hey! in a gray barouche for Thibet—it is a bit of an endurance run."

"The day will be of a heat. The—dew—dries—on—the—roses. I have—*envie*—of—sleep." And she drooped suddenly against his shoulder and slept in a flutter of fallen hair and the tangle of roses.

And Brian O'Beirne, love and luck in the fold of his arm, drove on in the journey for the dream.

T H E G R I Z Z L Y

A NEW NOVEL BY JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

Continued from page 144 of this issue.

Bruce laughed a little grimly.
"Fortunes o' war, Jimmy," he said.
"You don't go hunting grizzlies with a pack of lap-dogs, an' you've got to expect to lose some of them sooner or later. We've tackled the wrong bear, that's all. He's beat us."

"Beat us!"

"I mean he's beat us in a square game, an' we dealt a raw hand at that in using dogs at all. Do you want that bear bad enough to go after him my way?"

Langdon nodded.

"What's your scheme?"

"You've got to drop pretty ideas when you go grizzly hunting," began Bruce.
"And especially when you run up against a killer. There won't be any hour between now an' denning-up time that this grizzly doesn't get the wind from all directions. How? He'll make detours. I'll bet if there was snow on the ground you'd find him back-tracking two miles out of every six, so he can get the wind of anything that's following him. And he'll travel mostly nights, layin' high up in the rocks an' shale during the day. If you want any more shootin', there's just two things to do, an' the best of them two things is to move on and find other bears."

"Which I won't do, Bruce. What's your scheme for getting this one?"

Bruce was silent for several moments before he replied.

"We've got his range mapped out to a mile," he said then. "It begins up at the first break we crossed, and it ends down here where we came into this valley. It's about twenty-five miles up an' down. He don't touch the mount'ins west of this valley nor the mount'ins east of the other valley, an' he's dead certain to keep on makin' circles so long as we're after him. He's hikin' southward now on the other side of the range."

"We'll lay here for a few days an' not move. Then we'll start Metoosin

through the valley over there with the dogs, if there's any left, and we'll start south through this valley at the same time. One of us will keep to the slopes an' the other to the bottom, an' we'll travel slow. Get the idee?"

"That grizzly won't leave his country, an' Metoosin is pretty near bound to drive him around to us. We'll let him do the open hunting an' we'll skulk. The bear can't get past us both without giving one of us shooting."

"It sounds good," agreed Langdon.
"And I've got a lame knee that I'm not unwilling to nurse for a few days."

SCARCELY were the words out of Langdon's mouth when a sudden rattle of hobble-chains and the startled snort of a grazing horse out in the meadow brought them both to their feet.

"Utim!" whispered Metoosin, his dark face aglow in the firelight.

"You're right—the dogs," said Bruce, and he whistled softly.

They heard a movement in the brush near them and a moment later two of the dogs came into the firelight. They slunk in, half on their bellies, and as they prostrated themselves at the hunters' feet, a third and a fourth joined them.

They were not like the pack that had gone out that morning. There were deep hollows in their sides; their wiry crests were flat; they were hard run, and they knew that they were beaten. Their aggressiveness was gone, and they had the appearance of whipped curs.

A fifth came in out of the night. He was limping, and dragging a torn foreleg. The head and throat of one of the others was red with blood. They all lay flat on their bellies, as if expecting condemnation.

"We have failed," their attitude said; "we are beaten, and this is all of us that are left."

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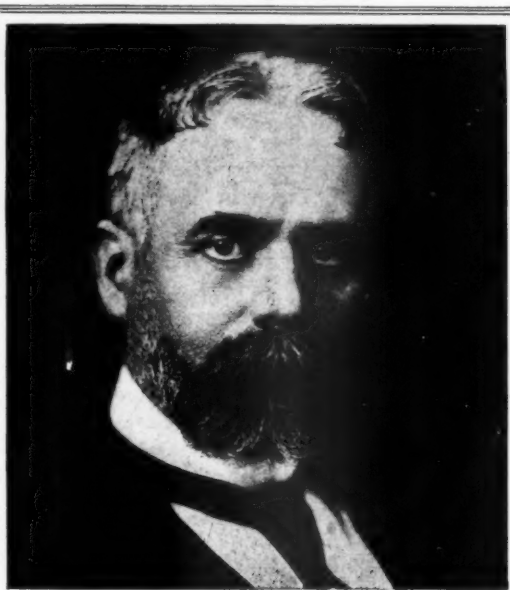
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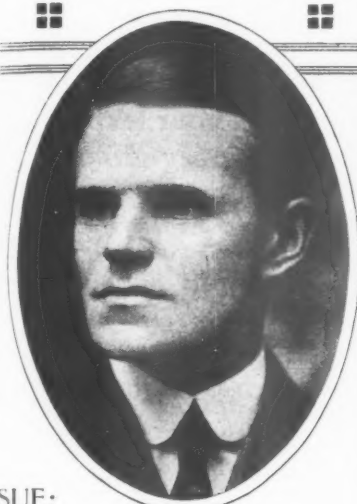
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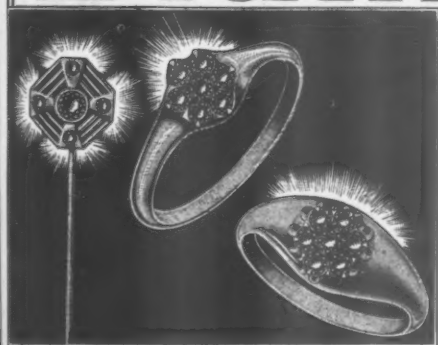


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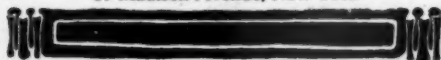
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Mutely Bruce and Langdon stared at them. They listened—waited. No other came. And then they looked at each other.

"Two more of them gone," said Langdon.

Bruce turned to a pile of panniers and canvases and pulled out the dog-leashes. Up in his tree Muskwa was all a-tremble. Within a few yards of him he saw again the white-fanged horde that had chased Thor and had driven himself into the crevice. Of the men he was no longer greatly afraid. They had attempted him no harm, and he had ceased to quake and snarl when one of them passed near. But the dogs were monsters. They had given battle to Thor. They must have beaten him, for Thor had run away.

The tree to which Muskwa was fastened was not much more than a sapling, and he lay in the saddle of a crotch ten feet from the ground when Metoosin led one of the dogs past him. The Airedale saw him and made a sudden spring that tore the leash from the Indian's hand. His leap carried him almost up to Muskwa. He was about to make another spring when Langdon rushed forward with a fierce cry, caught the dog by his collar, and with the end of the leash gave him a sound beating.

This act puzzled Muskwa more than ever. The man had saved him. He had beaten the monster with the red mouth and the white fangs, and all of those monsters were now being taken away at the ends of ropes.

When Langdon returned he stopped close to Muskwa's tree and talked to him. Muskwa allowed Langdon's hand to approach within six inches of him, and did not snap at it. Then a strange and sudden thrill shot through him. While his head was turned a little Langdon had boldly put his hand on his furry back. And in the touch there was not hurt! His mother had never put her paw on him as gently as that!

Half a dozen times in the next ten minutes Langdon touched him. For the first three or four times Muskwa bared his two rows of shining teeth, but he made no sound. Gradually he ceased even to bare his teeth.

Langdon left him then, and in a few moments he returned with a chunk of raw caribou meat. He held this close to Muskwa's nose. Muskwa could smell it, but he backed away from it, and at last Langdon placed it beside the basin at the foot of the tree and returned to where Bruce was smoking.

"Inside of two days he'll be eating out of my hand," he said.

IT was not long before the camp became very quiet. Langdon, Bruce and the Indian rolled themselves in their blankets and were soon asleep. The fire burned lower and lower. Soon there was only a single smoldering log. An owl hooted a little deeper in the timber. The drone of the valley and the mountains filled the peaceful night. The stars grew brighter. Far away Muskwa heard the rumbling of a boulder rolling down the side of a mountain.

There was nothing to fear now. Everything was still and asleep but himself, and very cautiously he began to back down the tree. He reached the foot of it, loosed his hold, and half fell into the basin of condensed milk, a part of it slopping up over his face. Involuntarily he shot out his tongue and licked his chops, and the sweet, sticky stuff that it gathered filled him with a sudden and entirely unexpected pleasure. For a quarter of an hour he licked himself. And then, as if the secret of this delightful ambrosia had just dawned upon him, his bright little eyes fixed themselves covetously upon the tin basin. He approached it with commendable strategy and caution, circling first on one side of it and then on the other, every muscle in his body prepared for a quick spring backward if it should make a jump for him. At last his nose touched the thick, luscious feast in the basin, and he did not raise his head again until the last drop of it was gone.

The condensed milk was the one biggest factor in the civilizing of Muskwa. It was the missing link that connected certain things in his lively little mind. He knew that the same hand that had touched him so gently had also placed this strange and wonderful feast at the foot of his tree, and that same hand had

also offered him meat. He did not eat the meat, but he licked the interior of the basin until it shone like a mirror in the starlight.

In spite of the milk, he was still filled with a desire to escape, though his efforts were not as frantic and unreasoning as they had been. Experience had taught him that it was futile to jump and tug at the end of his leash, and now he fell to chewing at the rope. Had he gnawed in one place he would probably have won freedom before morning, but when his jaws became tired he rested, and when he resumed his work it was usually at a fresh place in the rope. By midnight his gums were sore, and he gave up his exertions entirely.

Humped close to the tree, ready to climb up it at the first sign of danger, the cub waited for morning. Not a wink did he sleep. Even though he was less afraid than he had been, he was terribly lonesome. He missed Thor, and he whimpered so softly that the men a few yards away could not have heard him had they been awake. If Pipoonaskoos had come into the camp then, Muskwa would have welcomed him joyfully.

MORNING came, and Metoosin was the first out of his blankets. He built a fire, and this roused Bruce and Langdon. The latter, after he had dressed himself, paid a visit to Muskwa, and when he found the basin licked clean he showed his pleasure by calling the others' attention to what had happened.

Muskwa had climbed to his crotch in the tree, and again he tolerated the stroking touch of Langdon's hand. Then Langdon brought forth another can from a cowhide pannier and opened it directly under Muskwa, so that he could see the creamy white fluid as it was turned into the basin. He held the basin up to Muskwa, so close that the milk touched the cub's nose, and for the life of him Muskwa could not keep his tongue in his mouth. Inside of five minutes he was eating from the basin in Langdon's hand! But when Bruce came up to watch the proceedings the cub bared all his teeth and snarled.

"Bears make better pets than dogs,"

affirmed Bruce a little later, when they were eating breakfast. "He'll be following you around like a puppy in a few days, Jimmy."

"I'm getting fond of the little cuss already," replied Langdon. "What was that you were telling me about Jameson's bears, Bruce?"

"Jameson lived up in the Kootenay country," said Bruce. "Reg'lar hermit, I guess you'd call him. Came out of the mountains only twice a year to get grub. He made pets of grizzlies. For years he had one as big as this fellow we're chasing. The bear was a cub when Jameson got 'im, and when I saw him he weighed a thousand pounds an' followed Jameson wherever he went, like a dog. Even went on his hunts with him, an' they slept beside the same campfire. Jameson loved bears, an' he'd never kill one."

Langdon was silent. After a moment he said:

"And I'm beginning to love them, Bruce. I don't know just why, but there's something about bears that makes you love them. I'm not going to shoot many more—perhaps none after we get this dog-killer we're after. I almost believe he will be my last bear." Suddenly he clenched his hands, and added angrily: "And to think there isn't a province in the Dominion or a State south of the Border that has a closed season for bear! It's an outrage, Bruce. They're classed with vermin, and can be exterminated at all seasons. They can even be dug out of their dens with their young ones—and—so help me!—I've helped to dig them out! We're beasts, Bruce. Sometimes I almost think it's a crime for a man to carry a gun. And yet—I go on killing."

"It's in our blood," laughed Bruce, unmoved. "Did you ever know a man, Jimmy, that didn't like to see things die? Wouldn't every mother's soul of 'em go to a hanging if they had the chance? Wont they crowd like buzzards round a dead horse, to get a look at a man crushed to a pulp under a rock or a locomotive engine? Why, Jimmie, if there weren't no law to be afraid of, we humans 'd be killing one another for the fun of it! We would. It's born in us to want to kill."

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"And we take it all out on brute creation," mused Langdon. "After all, we can't have much sympathy for ourselves if a generation or two of us are killed in war, can we? Mebbe you're right, Bruce. Inasmuch as we can't kill our neighbors legally whenever we have the inclination, it's possible the Chief Arbiter of things sends us a war now and then to relieve us temporarily of our blood-thirstiness. Hello—what in thunder is the cub up to now?"

Muskwa had fallen the wrong way out of his crotch and was dangling like the victim at the end of a hangman's rope. Langdon ran to him, caught him boldly in his bare hands, lifted him up over the limb and placed him on the ground. Muskwa did not snap at him or even growl.

BRUCE and Metoosin were away from camp all of that day, spying over the range to the westward, and Langdon was left to doctor a knee which he had battered against a rock the previous day. He spent most of his time in company with Muskwa. He opened a can of their griddle-cake syrup, and by noon he had the cub following him about the tree and straining to reach the dish that was held temptingly just out of reach. Then he would sit down, and Muskwa would climb half over his lap to reach the syrup.

At his present age, Muskwa's affection and confidence were easily won. A baby black bear is very much like a human baby: he likes milk; he loves sweet things; and he wants to cuddle up close to any living thing that is good to him. He is the most lovable creature on four legs—round and soft and fluffy, and so funny that he is sure to keep everyone about him in good humor. More than once that day Langdon laughed until the tears came, and especially when Muskwa made determined efforts to climb up his leg to reach the dish of syrup.

As for Muskwa, he had gone syrup mad. He could not remember that his mother had ever given him anything like it, and Thor had produced nothing better than fish.

Late in the afternoon, Langdon un-

tied Muskwa's rope and led him for a stroll down toward the creek. He carried the syrup dish, and every few yards he would pause and let the cub have a taste of its contents. After half an hour of this maneuvering he dropped his end of the leash entirely, and walked campward. And Muskwa followed! It was a triumph, and in Langdon's veins there pulsed a pleasurable thrill which his life in the open had never brought to him before.

IT was late when Metoosin returned, and he was quite surprised that Bruce had not shown up. Darkness came, and they built up the fire. They were finishing supper an hour later when Bruce came in, carrying something swung over his shoulders. He tossed it close to where Muskwa was hidden behind his tree.

"A skin like velvet, and some meat for the dogs," Bruce said. "I shot it with my pistol."

He sat down and began eating. After a little Muskwa cautiously approached the carcass that lay doubled up three or four feet from him. He smelled of it, and a curious thrill shot through him. Then he whimpered softly as he muzzled the soft fur, still warm with life. And for a time after that he was very still.

For the thing that Bruce had brought into camp and flung at the foot of his tree was the dead body of little Pipoonaskoos!

CHAPTER XVI

THAT night the big loneliness returned to Muskwa. Bruce and Metoosin were so tired after their hard climb over the range that they went to bed early, and Langdon followed them, leaving Pipoonaskoos where Bruce had first thrown him.

Scarcely a move had Muskwa made after the discovery that had set his heart beating a little faster. He did not know what death was, or what it meant, and as Pipoonaskoos was so warm and soft, Muskwa was sure that he would move after a little. He had no inclination to fight Pipoonaskoos now.

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stars filled the sky, and the fire burned low. But Pipoonaskoos did not move. Gently at first, Muskwa began nosing him and pulling at his silken hair, and as he did this he whimpered softly, as if saying: "I don't want to fight you any more, Pipoonaskoos! Wake up, and let's be friends!"

But still Pipoonaskoos did not stir, and at last Muskwa gave up all hope of waking him: And still whimpering to his fat little enemy of the green meadow how sorry he was that he had chased him, he snuggled close up to Pipoonaskoos and in time went to sleep.

Langdon was first up in the morning, and when he came over to see how Muskwa had fared during the night he suddenly stopped, and for a full minute he stood without moving, and then a low, strange cry broke from his lips. For Muskwa and Pipoonaskoos were snuggled as closely as they could have snuggled had both been living, and in some way Muskwa had arranged it so that one of the dead cub's little paws was embracing him.

Quietly Langdon returned to where Bruce was sleeping, and in a minute or two Bruce returned with him, rubbing his eyes. And then he too stared, and the men looked at each other.

"Dog meat," breathed Langdon. "You brought it home for dog meat, Bruce!"

Bruce did not answer. Langdon said nothing more, and neither talked very much for a full hour after that. During that hour Metoosin came and dragged Pipoonaskoos away, and instead of being skinned and fed to the dogs, he was put into a hole down in the creek-bottom and covered with sand and stones. That much, at least, Bruce and Langdon did for Pipoonaskoos.

THIS day Metoosin and Bruce again went over the range. The mountaineer had brought back with him bits of quartz in which were unmistakable signs of gold, and they returned with an outfit for panning.

Langdon continued his education of Muskwa. Several times he took the cub near the dogs, and when they snarled and strained at the ends of their leashes, he whipped them, until with quick, under-

standing they gripped the fact that Muskwa, although a bear, must not be harmed.

In the afternoon of this second day he freed the cub entirely from the rope, and he had no difficulty in recapturing it when he wanted to tie it up again. The third and fourth days Bruce and the Indian explored the valley west of the range, and convinced themselves finally that the "colors" they found were only a part of the flood-drifts, and would not lead to fortune.

On this fourth night, which happened to be thick with clouds, and chilly, Langdon experimented by taking Muskwa to bed with him. He expected trouble. But Muskwa was as quiet as a kitten, and once he found a proper nest for himself he scarcely made a move until morning. A part of the night Langdon slept with one of his hands resting on the cub's soft, warm body.


According to Bruce it was now time to continue the hunt for Thor, but a change for the worse in Langdon's knee broke in upon their plans. It was impossible for Langdon to walk more than a quarter of a mile at a time, and the position he was compelled to take in the saddle caused him so much pain that to prosecute the hunt even on horseback was out of the question.

"A few more days wont hurt any," consoled Bruce. "If we give the old fellow a longer rest he may get a bit care less."

The three days that followed were not without profit and pleasure for Langdon. Muskwa was teaching him more than he had ever known about bears, and especially bear cubs, and he made notes voluminously.

The dogs were now confined to a clump of trees fully three hundred yards from the camp, and gradually the cub was given his freedom. He made no effort to run away, and he soon discovered that Bruce and Metoosin were also his friends. But Langdon was the only one he would follow.

ON the morning of the eighth day after their pursuit of Thor, Bruce and Metoosin rode over into the eastward valley with the dogs. Metoosin



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was to have a day's start, and Bruce planned to return to camp that afternoon so that he and Langdon could begin their hunt up the valley the next day.

It was a glorious morning. A cool breeze came from the north and west, and about nine o'clock Langdon fastened Muskwa to his tree, saddled a horse and rode down the valley. He had no intention of hunting. It was a joy merely to ride and breathe in the face of that wind and gaze upon the wonders of the mountains.

He traveled northward for three or four miles, until he came to a broad, low slope that broke through the range to the westward. A desire seized upon him to look over into the other valley, and as his knee was giving him no trouble, he cut a zigzag course upward that in half an hour brought him almost to the top.

Here he came to a short, steep slide that compelled him to dismount and continue on foot. At the summit he found himself on a level sweep of meadow, shut in on each side of him by the bare rock walls of the split mountains, and a quarter of a mile ahead he could see where the meadow broke suddenly into the slope that shelved downward into the valley he was seeking.

Halfway over this quarter of a mile of meadow there was a dip into which he could not see, and as he came to the edge of this he flung himself suddenly upon his face and for a minute or two lay as motionless as a rock. Then he slowly raised his head.

A hundred yards from him, gathered about a small water-hole in the hollow, was a herd of goats. There were thirty or more, most of them Nannies with young kids. Langdon could make out only two Billies in the lot. For half an hour he lay still and watched them. Then one of the Nannies struck out with her two kids for the side of the mountain; another followed, and seeing that the whole band was about to move, Langdon rose quickly to his feet and ran as fast as he could toward them.

For a moment Nannies, Billies and little kids were paralyzed by his sudden appearance. They faced half about and stood as if without the power of flight

until he had covered half the distance between them. Then their wits seemed to return all at once, and they broke in a wild panic for the side of the nearest mountain. Their hoofs soon began to clatter on boulder and shale, and for another half-hour Langdon heard the hollow booming of the rocks loosened by their feet high up among the crags and peaks. At the end of that time they were infinitesimal white dots on the skyline.

HE went on, and a few minutes later looked down into the other valley. Southward this valley was shut out from his vision by a huge shoulder of rock. It was not very high, and he began to climb it. He had almost reached the top when his toe caught in a piece of slate, and in falling he brought his rifle down with tremendous force on a boulder.

He was not hurt, except for a slight twinge in his lame knee. But his gun was a wreck. The stock was shattered close to the breech, and a twist of his hand broke it off entirely.

As he carried two extra rifles in his outfit the mishap did not disturb Langdon as much as it might otherwise have done, and he continued to climb over the rocks until he came to what appeared to be a broad, smooth ledge leading around the sandstone spur of the mountain. A hundred feet farther on he found that the ledge ended in a perpendicular wall of rock. From this point, however, he had a splendid view of the broad sweep of country between the two ranges to the south. He sat down, pulled out his pipe, and prepared to enjoy the magnificent panorama under him while he was getting his wind.

Through his glasses he could see for miles, and what he looked upon was an unhunted country. Scarcely half a mile away a band of caribou was filing slowly across the bottom toward the green slopes to the west. He caught the glint of many ptarmigan wings in the sunlight below. After a time, fully two miles away, he saw sheep grazing on a thinly verdured slide.

He wondered how many valleys there were like this in the vast reaches of the Canadian mountains that stretched three

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hundred miles from sea to prairie, and a thousand miles north and south. Hundreds, even thousands, he told himself, and each wonderful valley a world complete within itself; a world filled with its own life, its own lakes and streams and forests, its own joys and its own tragedies.

Here in this valley into which he gazed was the same soft droning and the same warm sunshine that had filled all the other valleys; and yet here, also, was a different life. Other bears ranged the slopes that he could see dimly with his naked eyes far to the west and north. It was a new domain, filled with other promise and other mystery, and he forgot time and hunger as he sat lost in the enchantment of it.

It seemed to Langdon that these hundreds or thousands of valleys would never grow old for him; that he could wander on for all time, passing from one into another, and that each would possess its own charm, its own secrets to be solved, its own life to be learned. To him they were largely inscrutable; they were cryptic, as enigmatical as life itself, hiding their treasures as they droned through the centuries, giving birth to multitudes of the living, demanding in return other multitudes of the dead. As he looked off through the sunlit space he wondered what the story of this valley would be, and how many volumes it would fill, if the valley itself could tell it.

First of all, he knew, it would whisper of the creation of a world; it would tell of oceans torn and twisted and thrown aside—of those first strange eons of time when there was no night,

but all was day; when weird and tremendous monsters stalked where he now saw the caribou drinking at the creek, and when huge winged creatures, half bird and half beast, swept the sky where he now saw an eagle soaring.

And then it would tell of The Change—of that terrific hour when the earth tilted on its axis, and night came, and a tropical world was turned into a frigid one, and new kinds of life were born to fill it.

It must have been long after that, thought Langdon, that the first bear came to replace the mammoth, the mastodon and the monstrous beasts that had been their company. And that first bear was the forefather of the grizzly he and Bruce were setting forth to kill the next day!

SO engrossed was Langdon in his thoughts that he did not hear a sound behind him. And then something roused him.

It was as if one of the monsters he had been picturing in his imagination had let out a great breath close to him. He turned slowly, and the next moment his heart seemed to stop its beating; his blood seemed to grow cold and lifeless in his veins.

Barring the ledge not more than fifteen feet from him, his great jaws agape, his head moving slowly from side to side as he regarded his trapped enemy, stood Thor, the King of the Mountains!

And in that space of a second or two Langdon's hands involuntarily gripped at his broken rifle, and he decided that he was doomed!

The next, and final, installment of Mr. Curwood's story will be in the June issue of The Red Book Magazine, which will appear on the news-stands May 23rd.

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THE THIRTEENTH COMMANDMENT

A NEW NOVEL BY RUPERT HUGHES

Continued from page 76 of this issue.

had a wholesome instinct that the fire should be kept at home or the home should be built about the fire.

And now she did not wonder why she had failed to prize Duane's embrace. She wondered how she had endured it.

She groveled in remorse. She felt a need to go to Clay and make a confession and beg his absolution. She pondered this duty a long while with dread. It would be an odious humiliation. "And yet you belong to him, and you have been false to him," her conscience told her.

She lingered in this mire of self-abasement till abruptly she was rescued from it by a reaction of pride. Pride shot up in her dark soul like a rocket in the night and she cried to herself and the world:

"No, I don't belong to Clay Wimburn! or to Tom Duane! or to anybody! I belong to Me! to my Me! My soul's my own and my body's my own and my life is my own. I'm not going to give 'em up to any man. I'm not going to marry anybody. All the men are disgusting, greedy pigs. They don't want to marry any woman; they only want to hire a wife—rent a plaything—something to kiss and pet for a few hours a week. All the rest of the time she must take care of herself and fill her time the best she can. Well, I'm going to be an old maid and live my own life and pay my own way."

The change in her mood was as violent as if she had been drifting in a moonlit canoe and her lovers had rocked the boat and spilled her into icy water. She had to swim.

CHAPTER LXIII

IT was on this mood that Mrs. Chivvis came in. She stared at Daphne, noted her excitement and her solitude, and asked with characteristic brilliance:

"Well, well, you home?"

Daphne answered politely, if obviously:

"Yes."

Since she did not explain further, Mrs. Chivvis explained her own affairs. And Daphne was so exhausted with the sultry problems of love that Mrs. Chivvis' business gossip was completely refreshing.

"I've been down to the Woman's Exchange," she said, "trying to sell some of my needlework. They were very nice about it, but it means a terrible amount of labor for a pittance of money. You have to pay them so much a year for the privilege of putting your things on sale there. Then they don't guarantee to return it in good condition, and they don't guarantee to sell it; or if they do they charge you twenty per cent for their end of it.

"I couldn't see any profit in that, so I went to one of the jobbers. He said my style of work brought good prices in the big stores. But they won't pay him much and he'll pay me less.

"I was thinking—you know Mr. Chivvis says the reason women are so much worse paid than men is because women don't know how to market their services. Most business men, he says, are poor business men, but they're really all better than the best of business women—except actresses and authoresses and a few of that kind of ess.

"My mother used to spend half a day making lamplighters out of old newspapers. My father came home one time when she was all tired out twisting the things. And I remember his saying, 'Abby'—her name was Abigail—'Abby,' he said, 'just how high do you value your time?' he said, and she said, 'How do you mean, Bijé?'—his name was Abijah. And he said, 'Well, Abby, you've spent three hours makin' about a hundred lamplighters: and I can buy five hun-

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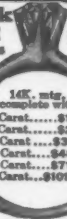
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dred matches for five cents. So I calculate that you make about one cent every three hours, or four cents a day on a twelve hour day."

"You could have knocked her over with a feather. And after that if you wanted to get Ma mad you just had to say 'lamplighter.'"

"For Heaven's sake!" said Daphne, forgetting her own woes in the sorry picture of such spendthrift parsimony.

Mrs. Chivvis felt it apropos to bring out a cherished heirloom, a piece of age-yellowed cloth in which fingers (long since as cold and white as the crochet needles they had fenced with) had stitched three alphabets, each in capitals and small letters, with various conventionalized symbols between and an ornate border and, beneath, a stanza of highly discouraging verses:

Our life is like a summer's day,
It seems so quickly past.
Youth is the morning bright and gay,
And if 'tis spent in wisdom's way
We meet old age without dismay,
And death is sweet at last.

Daphne recognized the cloth as a "sampler," and a good one, but it hurt her to contemplate the patience it had required.

"Ugh!" she groaned, "I suppose the poor woman thought that she was spending her youth in wisdom's way when she was working on that, but I don't wonder she found death sweet. What awful piffle women have wasted their energy on all through the ages! They haven't even made money at it."

"Do you think the money part of it makes a difference?"

"You bet I do, for however you earn money, if you make a lot of it, you can buy things worth while with it. It's all right to do foolish things to get money, if you spend the money in wisdom's way. But when I see those silly old things our grandmothers fooled away their lives on, I don't think they were as good as we pretend. And I don't think we're as bad as we pretend."

Daphne fingered the sampler with its crazy mosaic of thread-squares. It had been everybody's religion to praise the sewing generation, and to uphold the

eternal needle-wielders as themselves samplers to model life on. Yet while they were weaving these table-covers and tidies and rag-rugs and mottoes, their sons and husbands were conquering the wilderness, carrying the flag from ocean to ocean, building cities, laying down railroads and aqueducts, inventing steam engines and steamboats and iron ships and telegrams. The contrast was severe.

Mrs. Chivvis was a trifle shocked at Daphne's reception of her sampler, but she said in its defense:

"Well, even at that, there's money in these things and in all sorts of needle-things, if you have a little capital."

"That's different again," said Daphne. "And I've got some capital now. Do you remember suggesting to me once that we might go into business together—you to furnish the brains and me the money?"

"Oh, I didn't put it that way!"

"Well, it's true anyhow. Well, would you?"

"Land sakes, if you're a mind to furnish the money and the ideas, and let me count the pennies, I'd like nothing better."

"Great! What could we go into?"

"What would you prefer?"

"Oh, any old business that will keep me busy and make a lot of money."

"My husband says that you can't make a lot of money without putting in a lot. That's one reason he has been kept down so. He never could get ahead. That was what we were saving up for—to get a little capital. And then the war came along—and we had to spend our savings. That same war has made your brother so rich that he could give you a small fortune. I don't believe you could do better than to put that into a business."

"Neither do I!" Daphne cried. "Let's!"

There was an unbelievable luxury in this being a capitalist and discussing great business investments calmly. It was a new kind of game, more exciting than tennis or tango—more novel than love.

"What could we do best? We don't want to spend all my money at once. What businesses are there?"



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Nothing helps mental concentration and clear judgment like a companionable chew of "PIPER." Men whose occupations demand careful deliberation and reflection naturally acquire the helpful habit of using plug tobacco—and experience leads them to the highest type of chewing tobacco made—

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THE AMERICAN TOBACCO COMPANY

She seized the morning paper and ransacked it as eagerly as if she were looking up the *matinée* advertisements. But she found nothing to her need.

WHILE Mrs. Chivvis pondered, Daphne went to the window and looked down into Columbus Circle. She was as impatient as a newly snared bird. She could see several restaurants, dance-halls, beer-halls, Chinese chop-suey emporiums and American quick-lunch rooms, moving-picture resorts, cigar stores, a florist's outside booth clinging to a saloon wall like an orchid on a rotten stump.

"There's nothing attractive down there," she sighed. "In England they have barmaids and in France cigar-maids, and in Germany the women are driving street-cars and taxicabs, but not for me, thank you. What are we going to do?"

"I like something with sewing in it," Mrs. Chivvis murmured.

"Flowers are nicer," said Daphne. "Last Sunday I was reading about a girl who came over here from Greece, a Spartan girl named Helen Something-or-other, who is paying twelve thousand dollars a year rental for a flower-stand. That's better business than Helen of Troy was in, eh? Some change from the old-fashioned flower girl, too, isn't it? How would you like flowers?"

"We-ell," Mrs. Chivvis mused, "flowers are nice. But they fade so fast. And you have to keep them half-frozen to sell them. I think I should prefer something with sewing in it."

"So I heard," Daphne smiled, but did not assent. "There's candy and there's tea—and toys; but—"

Daphne had really no specific ambitions, no call to glory, no mission for reformation, no poetic or dramatic yearnings, no overpowering desire to get her personality expressed or understood. She was not sure that she had a personality, and if she had she was not worried about its comprehension by herself or anyone else. Her one big emotion was a desire to make her money make more money—as much as possible as soon as possible.

She dreamed with less constraint than

Mrs. Chivvis, for Mrs. Chivvis was afraid of gorgeous things, lavish fabrics, high places, big figures. She wanted enough to live neatly on, and her idea of luxury was a bank account growing slowly and very surely.

But Daphne liked her food enhanced with pepper and sugar and syrups and rich sauces. She wanted paprika on her life.

She thought a long while, running her memory as it were up and down Fifth Avenue, peeping at windows and signs. She could not recall anything interesting as well as available.

At length she caught sight of the red telephone book of classified industries, and opening it skimmed over the running heads of the pages.

"Accountants—I don't know enough; Daddy does it by machinery. Art goods—I'm no good at art; boots and shoes—glue—hats—hosiery—insurance—ladies' clothing—ladies' hats—ladies' waists—lamp shades—"

"Lamp shades are nice," suggested Mrs. Chivvis. "I'd prefer something with sewing in it."

Daphne stared at the white, lean face, taut with the meekness and the stubbornness of a martyr. She felt sorry a little, and mischievous much. It pleased her to shock that saint. So she said:

"All right, I'll agree to something with sewing in it—underwear!"

Mrs. Chivvis' natural pallor turned wanner, the hue that is called white on white. She saw the humor in Daphne's eyes, but she thought it hardly a joking matter. She simply had to protest.

"Oh, that wouldn't be nice at all."

"Not nice?" Daphne cried. "Why, the nicest people wear it. If they don't they're not nice."

Mrs. Chivvis was all aflutter. Her eyes involuntarily rolled round the corner to see if her husband were near.

Daphne howled her delight and seized and hugged Mrs. Chivvis with such vigor that she broke the ice completely. She turned Mrs. Chivvis' white to a flush of pink and laughter.

"Oh, that's ever so much better!" Daphne shouted. "You don't know how becoming it is to you to blush. I'll have to say awful things to you often and

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Truth and Trade

By Bishop Warren A. Candler, Chancellor of Emory University, Atlanta



WHEN a seller and a buyer have made a trade, based on truth, both have obtained a benefit, and the community to which they belong has been benefited insofar as their interests affect the welfare of the community. Each has parted with that which the other needed, and in turn has obtained from his fellow-man what he himself needed. Honest exchanges, therefore, enhance values.

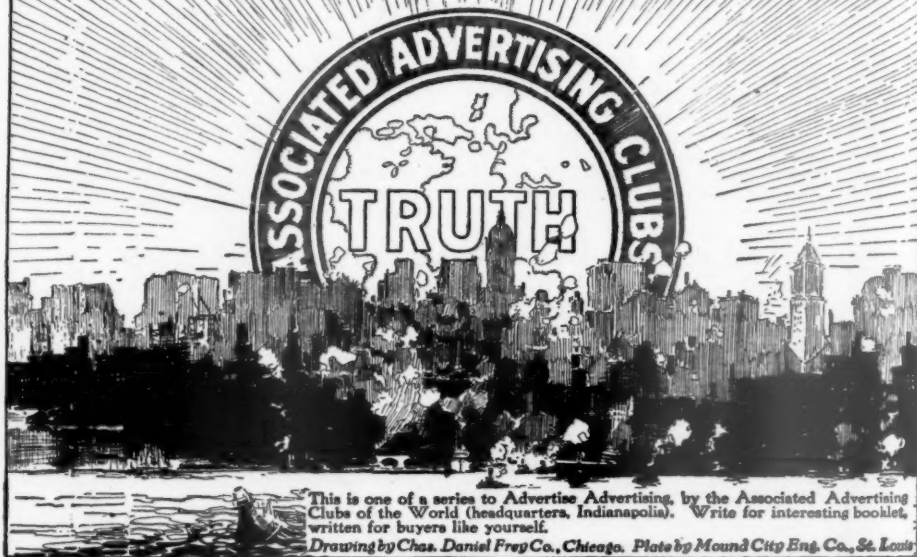
But trades based on untruth damage all concerned. They approach dangerously near to theft.

By advertising, buyers and sellers are brought together, and truthful advertising promotes the welfare of the commercial world; it is, in fact, a part of the wealth-producing forces of the world. But untruthful advertising is a fraud and the fosterer of fraud. It

partakes of the nature of the crime of getting money, or goods, under false pretenses. The medium of advertising, whatever its nature, which lends its columns to such advertising, accepts a bribe to become accessory to the same crime.

It is a far-reaching reform proposed by the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World in the motto "Truth". Such a sentiment must act like a health-laden current on the trade winds. Its influence will extend far beyond the limits of advertising, and stimulate honesty in all the processes and transactions of commerce.

The patron saints of the commercial world ought not to be Ananias and Sapphira. Lying spirits cannot guide safely the merchantmen of the world. The argosies of trade must sail by the pole-star of truth. Otherwise they will be wrecked.



In writing to advertisers it is of advantage to mention THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

get a little human color into you. But that's settled. I'm going into the lingerie business or none. You can blush all the time you make it, and when you sell it you'll be a vision of beauty."

Mrs. Chivvis tried a last feeble argument. "But there's no great money in—those things."

"No money!" Daphne echoed. "Well, when you got your trousseau didn't you pay about a million dollars for yours?"

"My trousseau was very modest," Mrs. Chivvis mumbled.

"I'll bet it was," Daphne howled. "Well, anyway, when I started to buy my trousseau, the prices for lingerie and negligee were simply appalling. And some of the things were worth the price—beautiful?—umm, they were dreams! If we could open a little shop and sell exquisite things—"

"But—"

"Oh, it would be the modestest shop of all, for no men would ever come around."

This exerted a strong influence on Mrs. Chivvis' mind, and later on her husband's mind. At first he was horrified, rampant; he glared at his wife as if she were guilty already of shameless behavior; he asked her who she thought he was, and what she thought he was.

Here again the contradictions of morality were manifest. The sacrosanctity of different portions of the human hide at different times is puzzling enough, but who shall justify the elaborately inconsistent regard for the various layers of garments—those which, as Daphne said, it is not nice not to wear?

Mr. Chivvis' grandmother would have made a decent pretence of fainting at a literary allusion to them, yet she wore ruffled pantalettes that obtruded below the periphery of her voluminous petticoats.

CHAPTER LXIV

THE market spirit smolders in women as in men. The air had reached it in Daphne. The blood of countless merchants was in her veins. She did not know what "atavism" meant but she was full of it.

Daphne was going to be independent but she was still all woman when it came to the selection of her special trade. She would be a business woman, but she would do a woman's business. She wandered among the stores and saw ever so many dainties and exquisites that she wanted to hang in her shop.

She was going to have a window! With her name on it! It was more fun than a limousine with crest on door.

Gradually her scheme enlarged. She would devote her shop to the whole mechanism of the boudoir. "Boudoir-wear" was a word that pleased her.

When she told Mrs. Chivvis the new trade-term, Mrs. Chivvis was almost ecstatic with relief. Poverty had imposed on her the necessity of selling unmentionables. Now she was emancipated to a dealer in laces and silks. She could write to her people and tell them what she was doing, without depreciation or evasion. Daphne was rhapsodically happy. She chanted:

"We'll sell boudoir caps and peignoirs and couvre-pieds and mules and stockings and breakfast jackets and bathrobes and cushions, handkerchiefs and handkerchief bags and sachet things and dressing-table accessories and perfumes and—I saw some exquisite embroidered bell-ropes. They're coming into style. Let's sell bell-ropes, and everything."

"I'll tell you!—let's sell trousseaux!—everything to the poor little distracted bride. I was nearly one myself and I know what the wretches suffer."

"And let's not charge 'em too much. The pitiful creatures have troubles enough without bankrupting everybody in advance. The price-tags put my romance on the blink. If it hadn't been for them I'd have been a nice old married lady by now."

She fell pensive over the memories revoked by the word "trousseau." She had come to New York to buy her own, and all her life had been changed thereby. People so rarely remain in New York for what they come for.

Daphne had done nearly everything except buy her trousseau. Now she was going to sell trousseaux for other people, and never have any of her own.

Her regrets, however, were soon for-

gotten in the multiplicity of her affairs. A shop must be found, rent paid in advance, fixtures installed, advertisements planned. Stock must be bought to sell.

It was human nature that made the partners quarrel over a name for the baby before the baby was born. They spoke of themselves as "The Firm."

The problem was what to put on the window and the stationery. Mrs. Chivvis was for plain

KIP and CHIVVIS

but Daphne felt that such exquisite wares as they were going to vend needed a better bush.

There were hours of debate over a name. They sewed while they wrangled. They were laying in what stock they could in advance. Mrs. Chivvis, having been forced to give up the chaste dignity of "Kip and Chivvis," ran amok and proposed "Daphne and Esther" or "Mlle. Daphne et Mme. Esther," even "Mesdames Kip et Chivvis."

As people do when they hunt for titles, they grew hysterical and argued excitedly for more and more intemperate fantasies—"The Wardrobe," "The Boudoir," "The Clothes Closet," "The Cedar Chest," "The Trousseau Shop," "Boudoiria," "The Lingerie-Mart," "Dainty Duds for Desperate Dames," "La Vie Intime," "La Stitch Intime," "Frills and Furbelows."

Finally Daphne claiming the majority of the power voted *en bloc* "Boudoirwear," and claimed the victory. Mrs. Chivvis surrendered with the amendment that "Miss Kip" should be at one side, "Mrs. Chivvis" at the other. She bribed the assembly by promising that a cousin of hers, a young artist from *The Washington News*, should paint a pretty signboard on a swinging shingle. After many designs had been composed and destroyed they agreed on this legend:

BOUDOIRWEAR

EVERYTHING FOR THE BOUDOIR
EXQUISITE THINGS FOR BRIDES

Miss Kip Mrs. Chivvis

The cousin painted it well and illuminated it with elaborate initials and an allegorical figure of a young lady in Cubist negligee. It had the traditional charm of a tavern board. In fact their shop was to be a tavern for women in search of refreshment.

The next puzzle was to find a place to spread their shelves and hang the sign. Lengthy discussions ensued as to the individualities of streets and sides of streets and blocks and neighbors. Long walks were necessary and interviews with real-estate brokers and agents.

Prices were appalling. Leases included the most ominous conditions. Places with the best attractions had the worst faults. Low rentals went with unfrequented regions. Situations where much traffic flowed past the door were so costly that they threatened all hope of profit.

Daphne and Esther gradually increased the maximum price originally resolved upon. It seemed necessary to take a desperate plunge or give up all hope of success.

The thousand-dollar capital had gone dwindling rapidly under Daphne's living expenses and the expenses of exploration. When the prices of fixtures were added to the cost of the least possible stock, plus the amount of the least practicable rent, multiplied by the number of months that must elapse before the assured income could approach the assured outgo, the venture began to look like nothing but a laborious method of squandering money.

Still their hearts were committed to the enterprise; and they settled at last upon an empty little shop in the late Thirties between Madison Avenue and Fifth. It cost only six hundred a year to rent, but its floor space was only twelve by eighteen.

It was a moment of historical importance when the somewhat too gallant real-estate agent offered them his fountain pen and pointed to a blank space for their signatures—he pointed with his little finger, because that one had a ring on it.

He accepted Daphne's check with a chivalrous bow and the deed was done.



"Don't tell me you never had a chance!"

"Four years ago you and I worked at the same bench. We were *both* discontented. Remember the noon we saw the International Correspondence Schools' advertisement? That woke me up. I realized that to get ahead I needed special training, and I decided to let the I. C. S. help me. When I marked the coupon I asked you to sign with me. You said, 'Aw, forget it!'"

"I made the most of my opportunity and have been climbing ever since. You had the same chance I had, but you turned it down. No, Jim, you can't expect more money until you've trained yourself to handle bigger work."

There are lots of "Jims" in the world—in stores, factories, offices, everywhere. Are *you* one of them? Wake up! Every time you see an I. C. S. coupon your chance is staring you in the face. Don't turn it down.

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Reports on 27,000 typical I. C. S. students show 14,900 now receiving \$1500 a year or more; 2451 receiving \$2500 or more; 413 receiving \$5000 or more; 20 receiving \$10,000 or more; and eight with annual incomes of \$25,000 or more.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE DONE YOU CAN DO

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Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, before which I mark X.

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THE two women walked out into the air full of repentance for their audacity, and full of dread of the future.

Troubles mustered about them as weeds shove up in a garden faster than they can be plucked out. Expenses undreamed-of materialized in swarms. Everything was delayed except the demands for their money. The petty-cash box emptied itself as fast as it was filled, like a sort of perverted fairy-purse.

But petty cash was the least of their dismays. The grand cash was the main problem. They had stitched their fingers full of holes and piled up reams of fabrics, but the total was pathetically small.

The shop was tiny for a shop, but it seemed as big as Madison Square Garden when they compared its area with what stock they had made and could buy with the remnant of Daphne's capital.

One thing was instantly demonstrated. They must give up their plan or go into debt. Indeed they already were in debt.

"We've got to take the plunge," said Daphne. "I'd rather die than go on paying a year's rent for an empty shop."

"I know," Mrs. Chivvis fretted, gnawing her thin lips, "but it's a risk. You'd better ask your brother."

"No!" Daphne stormed. "I'm going to win out on my own. Poor Bayard is too busy to be bothered with my troubles. He doesn't know I have any. And Leila is so busy with her social business that she never asks me what I'm up to."

"I drop in to lunch or dinner once in a while and she does all the talking—about her own new clothes or the people she's met. Then she asks how I am and I say 'Oh, all right,' and that convinces her that I've told her all I know."

"But what are we to do?" Mrs. Chivvis wailed. "We can't open the doors, and we have no money left."

"There's only one thing to do," Daphne answered with a sphinxic solemnity. "Buy on credit."

"But who'll give us credit?"

"If you could know the number of people who have offered to give me all the time I want!"

"Oh, Daphne!" Mrs. Chivvis gasped. But Daphne caught her up:

"They were homely old men."

"That only makes it worse. When I remember the manner of that real-estate wretch, it makes my blood boil."

"Your blood will never boil, Esther," Daphne laughed. "And neither will mine for any of these tradesmen. It was strictly trade."

"But what motive could they have, except—"

"Why, they wanted to sell goods. They told me that I must have a good stock, and that I was sure to succeed, because to-day is Lady's Day in business. Just look at the success we're having."

"We?"

"We women. And it's a case of nothing venture, nothing gain: nothing purchase, nothing sell: nothing borrow, nothing pay. The only way to get out of debt is to go in deeper—like getting a fishhook out of your thumb."

Mrs. Chivvis suffered herself to be persuaded. They visited the wholesalers and the jobbers and were well received, having paid cash before—and, thanks to Mr. Chivvis' suggestion, having been astute enough to demand discount for cash.

AND now the motor-trucks and the delivery wagons and the cycle-cars and the messenger boys began to pour stock into the little shop. It was pleasant not to have to pay for things, though the tips were reaching alarming proportions, and the bundle of bills for future settlement grew and grew.

Mrs. Chivvis made a list of their debts and tried to show it to Daphne, but she stopped her eyes and ears and forbade any discussion that would quench her spirit.

She had yielded to the kind of seduction in which the business world abounds. Business men listen to the murmur of "Thirty days—ninety days—all the time you want."

The same murmur is easier still when it is cooed into the ear of a woman anxious to be a business woman. Daphne had listened to it.

But after all, her intentions were honorable, and others who had succeeded had followed the same path. As

the world is run to-day, there was no other method to adopt. She felt, as the other women felt, who sought a livelihood. They were escaping petty slaveries, voluntary or involuntary. They were taking pride in trade and in selling other wares than themselves. They were setting their names on plate-glass windows and in flaring advertisements in the newspapers, rather than tamely surrender their names and their identities to an anonymous dependence on men.

All over the earth they shone: Countess So and So, Lady This-hyphen-That, Les Soeurs Telle et Telle, Hetty and Elsie, and Mary Elizabeth, Ida and Alice and Maudé and Anne, widows, weed and grass, old maids and young, wives and fiancées, women of every character and origin; were invading business; pretty Huns, silken Vandals, buxom Goths moving upon the old citadels of masculine civilization.

In New York City alone there were over six hundred thousand women earning wages—in the United States six million. And the quality of their work had risen with like rapidity. Half a century before, only one per cent of women wage-earners were in occupations as good as clerical. In 1915 there were fourteen per cent. They could not all marry, for there were forty thousand more women than men in New York, and in some other cities the disproportion was more fatal.

Yet they were not wrecking the homes, for while divorce had increased one-tenth of one per cent, marriage had increased two per cent and child-bearing two per cent. How could the home be less sacred or less popular because wives were ambitious and busy? They might wait longer to marry, but they would not be denied the blessings of the hearth, or its modern substitute, the domestic radiator.

And what boots it to applaud or bewail it? It is a convulsion of nature. As well scold Europe for going to war. The fact is it went to war, and who was to stop it? Wise people are those who accept the tide or the earthquake and devote themselves to profiting by it or escaping it, not to denouncing it.

CHAPTER LXV

DAPHNE was trying to earn what she should spend rather than kiss or quarrel it out of a father or a husband. She was fighting for and against things and conditions and dollars and competitors; inventing a market and devising ways and means to control it. It was brain-racking, but it was better than heart-racking.

In the swirl of her tasks, she almost forgot Clay Wimburn. She was too busy to care much. She had no time to mourn. Clay was only one among a myriad regrets, and his affairs could wait. Her business needs could not.

She had barely managed to dispose of Tom Duane's bid for her hand. When she got round to it she composed a note in the least commercial of styles. Business woman as she was, she could not withhold her emphasis or her underlinings. She wrote:

Dear Mr. Duane:

You paid me a wonderful compliment and I am awfully grateful for it, but I am—well, I don't know just what to say. Your mother was a darling and I felt oh so honored by her beautiful hospitality and she is such a beautiful woman, but—oh, please understand me!—I just can't make my heart obey my brain. One or the other is too small, or both.

But I do like you more than you will believe—too much in fact to take advantage of your good impulses. You will find somebody else far more attractive than me, but I hope you won't forget how much I wish to be

Your very sincere friend,

DAPHNE KIP.

Thus Daphne jilted Duane. He was shocked numb, for his hopes had gone soaring. His mother was mortally insulted, though she tried to make light of it.

"I'm jilted, too," she laughed. "If she hadn't seen me she might have accepted you."

But after the first bitterness they both realized that Daphne was at least not to be had for the mere asking. Duane loved her better than ever when he recovered from the first collapse. He was more determined than ever to win her.

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He had no rivalry from Clay, for Clay did not come near her. He spent a lot of money trying to get her off his mind. He got a good deal on his conscience, but not Daphne off his mind. He longed for her especially, too, because there came a sudden disaster to his schemes. He was not so rich as he had been. Indeed, he could not be sure that he was rich at all.

The bouncing munition stocks that were known as "war babies" had abruptly fallen into a decline. The submarine that torpedoed the *Lusitania* shattered Wall Street's joy, threw the dread of war into the United States, set everyone to questioning the problem of revenge and its cost.

The slump in the market came at the most unfortunate moment for Bayard and Clay. Any moment of slump, indeed, would have come most untimely, for their success depended on their success.

In his bewilderment, Clay bethought him of markets further West, and he set out on a tour of factories in Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago. In Cleveland, he saw Daphne's father and mother float by in a big touring gondola. They were sitting up importantly with a chauffeur of their own. Clay felt like stopping them to remind them that they owed the car and all their prosperity to him. But he lacked the vicious courage.

In a tenderer humor, he was impelled to run after the car and ask how Daphne was and send her his love; but he lacked that courage too.

He left Cleveland and went on to Detroit, where there was no one to tell him that Daphne had turned Duane away and was trying to be a business man.

And there was no one to tell him that Bayard was looking for him in frantic eagerness to borrow money from him.

CHAPTER LXVI

"KIP AND CHIVVIS" were making a picnic ground of the shop. Behind the soap-veiled windows they laughed and debated on arrangements and price-tags and show-cards. There was rapture in seeing the janitor nail up the pretty

signboard, and watching the letter-artist with the mail-stick sit in the window and paint their delicate names in gold leaf.

Mr. Chivvis, still out of a job, acted as maid of all work and stevedore and grew so useful that they had to put him out. And at last the moment arrived when they declared the shop open, "raised the curtain," as Daphne said.

She waited with a stage fright she had not felt in Reben's theater. There was no lack of temperament in her manner now. But there was no audience either.

On the first forenoon, not one human being crossed the threshold. In the afternoon a short-sighted woman looking for a pet-dog store drifted in by mistake. Also a girl entered to inquire her way to a rival establishment.

At night Kip and Chivvis locked their doors and went home, discouraged beyond words and dismally weary in the legs and in the smile-muscles, which had kept at an expectant tension all day long. And yet they felt that what they were doing was the right thing for them to do.

On the second day the place was more frequented. A number of men with things to sell broke in. Two women actually entered with intent to purchase. They ransacked the limited stock without finding anything just to their liking. They declined to have anything made or sent for. They said they would look "elsewhere" and come back later. The partners learned that those who would "come back later" never came back. "Elsewhere" became a word of hateful meaning, the name of a hostile realm, a black forest where promising customers wandered off and apparently were lost forever.

The partners began to abhor womanliness as it is revealed in "just looking around," and in shopping for the fun of it, and in garrulous discussions over colors and shades and matchings and cuttings. Daphne saw herself now as she had once been, an aisle-rover, a waster of sales-folk's wages and nerves, a vagrant without visible means of support, the means of support being some man, old or young, at work Elsewhere.

She wanted to scream and scratch at some of the loafers who took her time and paid nothing for it. She began to understand why shopgirls are impudent as a class and why they grow absent-minded and contemptuous and deaf and indifferent. She knew what it was to wrestle with a temptation to reach across her counter and tear a double handful of fuzz from the slender skulls of some of her annoyers.

Some purchases were made, but unimportant ones. They began to see what interested people and what did not. They realized that they had far too much of certain things and far too little of others. They tried to sell the deadwood by marking it down, but it would not move. They learned that, in fashions especially, people want what they want and would rather pay double for it than take what they are not taking, at half its cost.

The wares that sold best were the things of their own make, things sewn with personality. But Kip and Chivvis were too tired to renew their own toil at night. They put exorbitant prices on the remnant of their handiwork. And that made it sell better.

ONE day a great lady who could hardly squeeze through the door, creaked into the shop and spilled herself into a startled little chair like a load of coal.

She fanned herself with her fingers as if pleading for breath, and groaned miserably. Daphne felt that she was about to die on their hands or ask for an ambulance, but she asked instead for an embroidered breakfast-gown from the window.

Mrs. Chivvis fetched it, and the old ogress clutched it from her, holding it up to her nose as if to sniff it, but really to see it:

"That's it! that's what I've been looking for!" she wheezed. "Have you got much of this sort of thing?"

Mrs. Chivvis was about to confess the cold truth that they had next to none. Daphne intervened with saleswomanly enthusiasm: "Oh, yes! It's a *spécialité de la maison*."

She thought the old lady would like

a little French, and she received a couple of twinkling sparkles from the wrinkles and a sigh of sepulchral relief.

"Agh, that's good! My daughter is marrying in some haste—a young imbecile who's going over to France to run a motor ambulance. I'm Mrs. Romilly."

Mrs. Chivvis waited unperturbed for further identification. Daphne had never heard of Mrs. Romilly either, but she gasped as if she had been saying her prayers at the shrine of Romilly from childhood, and now had been visited by the patron saint.

"Oh, yes, of course,"—whatever that meant. "I think I read something of the engagement." But that was a bad guess.

"No—you didn't. At least I think not. Anyway, I've got to get the wretch as much of a trousseau as I can fling together in a few days. Paris is rather quiet and she won't need many outer clothes, but—er—under-things, you know."

"Oh, yes, indeed," Daphne panted, and threw Mrs. Chivvis a glance that said: "You remember what I told you about nice people wearing them."

Mrs. Romilly was choughing on: "I've been to several shops and I was in despair when I saw your sign. If you could do a lot of things in rather a hurry, I fancy I could give you a largeish order. And if the things were successful, I could throw quite a little trade your way. You're new, aren't you?"

Daphne assented that they were quite new. She brought forward an order pad and stood at attention. Mrs. Chivvis was trying to signal to Daphne that the whole thing was wildly impossible, but fortunately a young woman came in and occupied twenty minutes of Mrs. Chivvis' time discussing a problem in Cubist colors.

Mrs. Romilly had trousseau'd a large family of children and several poor relations. She knew what she wanted and what she ought to pay for it and when it should be done. Daphne took down her orders as if the little room were the mere vestibule to an enormous sweatshop where hundreds of sempsters would seize the job and complete it in a jiffy.

Mrs. Romilly finished her wholesale

A wise old head on spry young feet

A man is as old as he
walks.

There's sprightly youth-
ful walking in



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An old head is a wise head
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Because the Foster Friction
Plug won't let you slip.

No holes to track mud and dirt.
They give freedom and lightness
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They cost no more than the ordinary kind
—you can find them at all dealers—50
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order before Mrs. Chivvis' shopper had decided to look Elsewhere.

WHEN they were alone, the partners gazed at Daphne's list and then at each other.

"What on earth made you take it?" Mrs. Chivvis exclaimed. "You know we can't fill it."

"*Can't* is a word that no true business lady will use. We're going to fill it. We've got to."

"But how?"

"Darned if I know, but—well, we'll have to get a lot of sewing women in and sit up nights."

"But the material? We can't buy those things on credit. We haven't any more credit."

"Then I'll borrow cash and pay for it."

"Borrow where? You said you wouldn't trouble your brother."

"I guess here's where I do. I don't mind it so much now that I can report success. I'll go to him in a business way and offer him interest and all that. I'll put it up to him as a business proposition. I guess Mrs. Romilly's name is good enough collateral."

"But who is she? Where does she live?"

"I forgot to ask her. Look in the telephone book."

Mrs. Chivvis clawed the pages, and reported, "She's not here," as if that finished her. But Daphne brightened. "Then she must be a big bug. The best of them are not listed in the telephone books."

"But she ought to have a husband or something."

"Maybe he's too rich to work."

"But—"

"Anyway, Bayard will know. He knows all the important men in New York. And Leila knows all the women. I think I'll run right down now and meet him at his office and lunch with him."

She pinned a coquettish hat to her uncommercial poll, thrust her arms into her graceful jacket and sped toward the subway, looking like anything imaginable but a business person seeking funds for a large contract.

CHAPTER LXVII

ALL unconscious of Daphne's affairs, Bayard was approaching his office with the brisk manner of a triumphant capitalist. But that was bluff for outward effect. He was actually dizzy with loss of bearings and control.

Bayard had carried heavier burdens than Clay and under the sting of Leila's whip had taken greater risks for higher prizes.

When the abrupt depression in the upward swing of prosperity jolted him out of his seat, he was nauseated with remorse at his repetition of his old mistake. The reserve he had vowed he would build up had been put off and put off from to-morrow to the to-morrow of to-morrow.

Fortune had forgiven him his earlier prodigalities and taken him back into her favor. But he had scattered his gains once more, and now she would none of him.

He had not told Leila of his anxieties. She had lost the privilege of hearing his anxieties. He bluffed even her.

They were living now in a state of armed neutrality. Yet he was less willing to alarm her than if they had been on their old terms. Of nights he lay awake for hours at her side, not daring to move lest he waken her, not daring to groan or stretch out his arms appealingly to the dreadful gloom that was crowded with menaces. There are no tragedies or nightmares more terrible than those a business man endures in his sleepless nights.

Bayard knew that Leila was gadding about and reveling in gayeties, spending a fortune in new costumes, and finding herself with less and less sufficing clothes, the more she bought. He was afraid to add to his exhausted soul the burden of worrying over his wife's conduct, or to heed his jealousy when it whispered to him that she was on far too friendly terms with Wetherell. Even to mention his suspicions of the man would obligate him to smash Wetherell with his fists or kill him. And he dared not have a breach with Wetherell now, because Wetherell with his pockets full

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After you get a few loose-feeling suits of Chalmers "Porosknit" you'll enjoy real summer comfort and coolness.

With Chalmers "Porosknit" Union Suits there can be no "short-waisted" feeling. The Closed Crotch is elastic, therefore does not cut in the crotch.

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Chalmers "Porosknit" is comfortable, fits, stays put, cannot gape open nor bulge. The loose garment gives freely with every movement. Chalmers "Porosknit" does not—cannot—cling, sweaty and irksome, to the skin.

Be sure to remember that Chalmers "Porosknit" is unsuccessfully imitated. Demand the genuine—with label shown below.

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of contracts was Bayard's final hope of success.

Wetherell might cancel some of the agreements already entered into, or delay the payments. Delay would be as terrible almost as complete default, for Bayard had drawn some of his commissions in advance from his own firm, and used others as collateral for loans at the bank.

The crash in the Street had found him so extended that he could not recover without additional help. That very morning one of his brokers had called on him for a renewal of margins. He had to have five thousand dollars or he would lose fifty thousand.

All of his friends were on the same hunt. Those who had not speculated were carrying heavy factory charges for which they could not be reimbursed for months ahead. Wiseacres had said that this whole prosperity was only an artificial hysteria and that America would have to share the financial woes of Europe.

Rebuffed from every door, Bayard had gone to Wetherell's office—a mysterious sort of place surrounded by guards and secret-service men to ward off the menace of spies real and imaginary.

Bayard had unusual difficulty in passing the lines. The reason he soon learned. A new man was in charge in Wetherell's place, a retired British officer whose natural and affected gruffness was aggravated by the unpleasant nature of his task. He had only one eye. Over the other he wore a frosted monocle, and his glare had the look of a revolver muzzle.

He made Bayard describe who and what he was and what he wanted. Only Bayard's desperation gave him strength to ask this old Cyclops for an advance on new contracts.

Colonel Marchmont's nostrils shivered like a horse's as he snorted: "New contracts? New contracts? God bless me, man, we're going to cancel the old! The man Wetherell is a rascal, sir, a confounded sharper. We'd expose him and prosecute him if it were not for the joy it would give the Germans. If we can get him home we'll quietly shoot him for the dog he is. He took com-

missions on all sides—treasonable it was of him, with England in such need! And he has passed over to us cargoes of rotten goods that had to be condemned out of hand. We've taken away his license to deal in munitions, and he's liable for contravention of the Defense of the Realm regulations. And some of the people who signed contracts with him may be prosecuted in this country."

Bayard blazed at this: "My factory is as honorable as the Bank of England. We guarantee our goods. We welcome any investigation."

"Perhaps, perhaps. That remains to be seen. But at the present, we're holding up payments, all shipments, all orders. Is that quite clear? If you have any information to give as to the crookedness of this bounder, we'd welcome it, but that is all we can consider for the present. Good day, sir."

Bayard went away in a stupor. He had intelligence enough to feel that he could less safely attack Wetherell now than before. He would seem to be implicated in the fellow's malfeasance. He would advertise to his creditors that his vaunted contracts were worthless. Business men endure much to escape such revenge.

He kept his head high till he reached his own office. Then he fell into his chair and propped his elbows on his desk and gripped his hot brows in his hands as if he were holding his skull together. It is the business man's attitude of prayer. He was trying to rally his courage by appealing to the vague deity of circumstances, confessing his financial sins and promising a pure commercial life henceforth if he were saved but this once more.

IT was thus that Daphne found him when she opened the door narrowly and closed it behind her as softly as *La Tosca*. She was beaming with affection and importance, and when at her mischievous "Ahem!" Bayard looked up she was so pretty that he forgot himself long enough to smile and rush forward to embrace her.

"What brings you 'way down here?" he laughed, leading her caressingly to a chair.

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ANSCO COMPANY BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

"I don't know any other place to find you," she said. "You're never home."

"That's so," he sighed. "How's Clay? seen him lately?"

"Er—no—not very."

"He's out West somewhere—been gone some time."

"Er—yes."

She was wondering how to state her errand when the telephone rang. It startled Bayard strangely. He caught it to his lips as a toper lifts a glass. He pressed the receiver to his ear and evidently recognized the voice that said "Hello" from somewhere.

He answered in monosyllables of the least importance, but Daphne heard worlds of despair in them.

"Hello!—oh, yes—no—yes, I know—yes, I know—it's too bad—I can't help it—that's part of the day's work—of course—all right."

That sigh of "all right" was the most eloquent statement of "all wrong" that Daphne could imagine. It set her heart to beating with pity for him and with alarm for herself.

Bayard hung up the receiver, pushed the telephone away as a bitter cup and laughed sheepishly.

"Great convenience, the telephone!—just learned that I've dropped more money than I ever hoped to have. 'For want of a nail the shoe was lost.' Oh, well, it saves me from spending it foolishly. But if I had five thousand dollars—my God, if I had five thousand dollars. Do you know anybody who can lend a rising young capitalist the price of a shave? You haven't got that thousand I gave you, or any part of it, have you? It would do me a heap of good just now—I could make a killing with it—or a life-saving."

Daphne slumped. "No, honey, I haven't got it. I—I've spent it!"

He shook his head over her. "All you pretty little women are hell on money, honey, aren't you?"

"I guess so."

She wanted to justify herself out of the class he referred to, by telling him how she had invested his gift. But she could not boast of that without confessing that her investment was gone where his had gone unless he could help her.

Plainly he could not do that. So she resolved to spare him further regrets. She could think of nothing more helpful to substitute than a casual "How's Leila?"

"Don't ask me!" Bayard smiled. "Tell me."

"I haven't seen her for days and days."

"Then you don't dance, I judge."

"I haven't been dancing for a long while."

"Then you wouldn't see Leila. Well, what can I do for you, honey, before I go take some nasty medicine from the president?"

"Nothing, dear. I had to come down town on an errand, so I thought I'd run in and say hello."

"Well, hello!"

"And now that I've said it, good-by?"

"Good-by, honey. You're mighty pretty. Hear anything from home?"

"Not since the last letter from Mother that I sent down to your apartment. Get it?"

"I think so. Yes. I believe so. Well, good-by."

He kissed her and patted her back with doleful tenderness and she went out of his office into the elevator. Its iron-barred door and its clanking chains gave it a congenial prison feeling, and the bottomless pit it dropped into seemed even more appropriate.

CHAPTER LXVIII

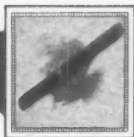
DAPHNE wanted to run away from her thoughts and she walked for a mile or two up the deep ravine of Broadway. She dared not go back to Mrs. Chivvis just yet with her bad news.

She thought of asking Clay for a loan. She swept the appalling idea from her brain with a puff of derision. She thought of asking Tom Duane for it. She tried to blow that idea from her mind, but it kept drifting back like a bit of stubborn thistle-down.

She could not outwalk it. She kept thinking that if she yielded, to weak scruples it would be disloyal to Mrs. Chivvis, to Mrs. Romilly, to Bayard, to herself, to her future, even to her darling little child of a shop.



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(Mentha
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SUGAR CANE
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of the
SAPOTA TREE
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There's no mystery about your Sterling Gum. As makers we're glad to tell you its ingredients. Their photographs we show above. The natural sap of the Sapota

Tree gives Sterling Gum its velvety body. The other ingredients are the flavors and sweetening. Each is a natural product of some tree or plant.

Combined they make your Sterling Gum "the gum from Nature's Gardens." Pure, delicious—made in the sunny Sterling Kitchen where clean white gloves cover the hands of every worker.

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- Point 2—Velvety body—
NO GRIT
- Point 3—Crumble-proof
- Point 4—Sterling purity
- Point 5—From a daylight
factory
- Point 6—Untouched by hands
- Point ⑦ What?

7777 Prizes. First Prize \$1000. What is the 7th Point? For details ask your dealer.



CINNAMON IN BLUE WRAPPER
PEPPERMINT IN RED WRAPPER

THE STERLING GUM CO., Inc., New York THE STERLING GUM CO. OF CANADA, Ltd., Toronto



Clean white gloves cover the clean hands of the Sterling workers

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"At length she grew so desperate that she stopped at a telephone booth and brazenly called up Duane's number. He chanced to be at home. When he heard her voice he cried:

"Oh, Lord, it's good to hear you. Sing again, sing again, nightingale!"

"I'm no nightingale. I'm a business woman, offering you an investment."

"Hush!" he roared.

"I wont hush. You've got to listen."

"Well, aint I listenin'?"

She told him the whole story. The name of Mrs. Romilly made him whistle. "Old Gorgon Zola" he called her, and added: "You're a made woman."

"But the clothes aren't made, and I can't make 'em till I get some money. Would you—could you advance me a little on the most excellent security?"

"Haven't I already offered you all I've got on the worst security in the world—marriage?"

"This is business. If you insist on anything else, it's all off. Anyway, think of all I've saved you by not marrying you."

"You've saved me from heaven and kept me in—all right, Central, I wont say it."

"Good-by. I'm sorry to have troubled you."

"Wait, wait! I'll surrender. Your voice alone is worth a thousand dollars a note. How much do you want? Where shall I bring it?"

"Mail two—er—five hundred dollars to the shop, will you, and I can never thank you enough."

"Hush. It's me that thanks you. Don't you want more?"

"No, thanks. And will you make it out to 'Kip and Chivvis'?"

"Oh Lord, what next! Kip and Chivvis. How do you spell it?"

She spelled it and he took it down. She could hear his pencil scratching on the distant telephone desk. At length he said: "It will be there in the early mail, and I may call round later to put a mortgage or something on the place."

"Good-by," she chuckled, and hung up the receiver. She was crying softly as she stole from the blessed booth, and she looked less like a successful business woman than ever.

SHE swept along Broadway in lyrical humor, till she remembered Mrs. Chivvis. She stopped again to telephone her and to say that she was too tired to come to the shop. She said she was going to call it a day's work and go home to make Caruso sing for her from the phonograph where she had him caged.

She took a taxicab home. As she paid the man and tipped him well, she noted that a big English racing car was standing at the curb.

Something made her think of Wetherell. She remembered her dread of him, and Bayard's bitter allusions to Leila's neglect. She felt that she ought to do something for that wavering home of her brother's. But what could she do?

She stopped off at Bayard's floor and rang the bell. Leila's new butler admitted her with pomp. She walked past him into the drawing-room. Leila and Wetherell were standing there in heavy coats. They seemed to be rather close together. They seemed to be a little shocked at seeing Daphne. She was horribly hurt at seeing them, but she chirruped:

"Just come in?"

"Just going out," Leila answered, kissing Daphne nervously.

"Where?" Daphne asked with intrepidity, as she shook hands with Wetherell—a prize-fighter's preliminary handshake it was.

"Oh—er—just motoring about a bit," Wetherell explained.

"Thanks—I'd love it," Daphne dared to say, almost as much amazed as they were at hearing her accept the invitation that had not been given.

Leila tried to escape: "We were thinking of going down on Long Island for dinner. Bayard is not coming home, he telephoned. So I thought—that is, we thought—"

"Fine," said Daphne. "I need a breath of air and a good jouncing."

"We've only got the runabout, you know," said Wetherell.

"Three can sit in that front seat easily," said Daphne. "Leila and I are both slim."

She was quite shameless from their point of view, but she felt that it would be shameful to let her brother's wife

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go unrebuked or at least unaided and unchaperoned on a cruise so perilous to reputation if not to character.

Heroism and duty are never more difficult than when they require meddling with some one's else affairs, particularly with affairs-in-law.

But Daphne went along.

Leila wanted to slap her over but she dared not protest. Leila was in the ugly craven mood of a soul fooling with temptation. She had committed no material breach of the trust that Bayard was expected to place in her, beyond the loathsome flippancy in honor that consents even to a light flirtation.

When Wetherell had tried to embrace her Leila had dodged away from him; when he had tried to kiss her she had boxed his ears fairly well; when he had spoken too fervently she had rebuked him. But she had continued to meet him. *

Part of his charm for Leila was that he kept telling her how she helped him. He loved to discuss his plans with her, and as these were superb they were interesting. He told her his risks and they were dramatic to her because they were enhanced by the danger of lawless possibility in their relations to each other.

Bayard had usually made the husbandly stupid mistake of telling Leila only so much of his business as was necessary to curb her extravagance and quench her dreams. Latterly he had told her nothing. Besides, a husband's business affairs are as trite and daily as bread and butter and fried eggs: anybody's else business is caviar or anchovies.

The long rides Leila and Wetherell had taken together had been devoted mainly to serious talks. They even discussed poetry. He remembered some of his Etonian Latin. She loved to hear him chant Virgil to the roll of the car. She had not the faintest idea of his correctness or his meaning, but she loved his sonority.

To-day Wetherell had come for her with a heavy burden of confession. He wanted to tell Leila of his disgrace. He felt no sense of evil in what he had done. He was as indignant at his superiors as they at him. But he wanted

to tell Leila everything. He felt that she would sympathize with him. He had grown to depend on her. There might be public scandal. He wanted to get his version before her first.

And now her little cat of a sister-in-law had to break in. Yet he dared not tell her how unwelcome she was. She plainly realized it. She must be suspicious. To forbid her to come along would confirm her suspicions. The only way to allay them was to take her with them and show her how circumspect they were.

So Daphne went along. They hated her and she hated herself for her cantankerous anachronism.

While she was at the miserable business she decided to make a good job of it. When they went down to the car, she squeezed in between Leila and Wetherell. Leila paled with jealousy and cold rage. Daphne completed the atrocity by murmuring to the giant she had to snuggle against:

"It's kind of Leila to come along and chaperon us, isn't it? It makes everything so proper for us two unattacheds."

Wetherell laughed metallically:

"Er—yes—quite so."

There was no further speech in the car till they had crossed Fifty-ninth Street and its aerial continuation on the mighty Queensborough Bridge and the shabby miles that led on into the more gracious portions of Long Island.

CHAPTER LXIX

THEY dined at Long Beach and watched the dancers, in sullen mood. Wetherell ordered much champagne and would not listen to Leila's pleas that he let it alone. He frightened her a little by his reckless mood, and Daphne began to dread the journey home in the dark with champagne hands on the steering wheel.

She wished she had minded her own business. She began to feel that she was to be punished for her nasty altruism.

She invited Wetherell to dance with her to get him away from the table for a while. He held her gingerly enough,

An artistic illustration of a woman's face, partially obscured by a branch of pussywillow flowers. She is looking towards the viewer with a soft expression. In the lower left corner, there is a detailed illustration of a rectangular box of 'Tetlow's Pussywillow Powder'. The box has a decorative pattern of small circles on its lid and vertical stripes on its sides. The brand name 'Tetlow's Pussywillow Powder' is written on the lid, and 'Henry Tetlow' is written in cursive below it.

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for he was afraid of Leila's jealous black eyes. Perhaps he was, like the favorite hero of his native land, loyally disloyal in his "faith unfaithful."

After Daphne and he had executed a funeral dance, Leila was emboldened to step out with him. They talked very earnestly and he seemed to horrify her by what he said to her. Daphne could not imagine what it was. Bayard had not told her of Wetherell's downfall from power.

Wetherell confessed to Leila in the dance and it sent her thoughts into vortices of bewilderment. It would have been different if he could have told her when they were alone in romantic environment with the tragedy made poetical.

Daphne's presence had turned the poetry into the most satirical prose. Leila saw that Daphne suspected her, despised her enough to try to protect her. Leila now was a married woman caught in intrigue by her sister-in-law.

In this cynical aspect, there was no romance—only disgust. And most disgusting of all was the hearing her lover confess that he was capable of financial embarrassment, and was culpable in the eyes of his own country—a martyr not of Nathan Hale's company, but of Benedict Arnold's stripe.

Leila was sickened with the sordid outcome of her romance. She had played with fire and got soot on her hands. She quit the dance and asked to be taken home.

Wetherell felt that she had turned against him and he reached for the last of the champagne to fling it down his throat. Leila grimly took it from his fingers and emptied it in the ice bucket.

"Chauffeurs and champagne are a bad combination," she laughed, but there was a sneer on her lips.

"Oh, very well!" Wetherell sneered in turn. He paid for the dinner and tipped the waiter with the lavishness of a bankrupt. He tipped lavishly the man who guarded his car, and swung out into the road with an instant speed that would have been prettier if there had been less danger.

There was a *mêlée* of automobiles for the first mile and Wetherell was al-

ternately hilarious and truculent in his loud comments on the drivers who detained his impatient soul. At the first important turn he whirled the car to the east instead of obeying the sign that pointed to New York.

Both Daphne and Leila told him of his error, but he roared:

"The longest way round is the homest way short—I mean—I do' know what I mean—but you do. Nice ni' for li'l spin."

Daphne and Leila were ashamed to be with him, and afraid to be with him. Wisdom told them to make him stop and let them out, even at the cost of walking home. But that wisdom is never heeded. People stick to the risky things with a tenacity denied to worthwhile objects.

Daphne and Leila were good sports, but they were not merry. Wetherell furnished all the merriment, and his was from wine and despair. As tipsy men do, he even pretended to be a little tipsier than he was. But the wine brought out the truth. He had to tell Daphne what he had told Leila, of his misfortune with his bally old government.

He asked Daphne to explain to Bayard how sorry he was that he was involved in the crash.

"Your broth' Bayard's aw'fly nice fel', Miss Skip. He's got nicest li'l wife in worl'. Perf'ly good li'l girl. Straight as a—straight as they make 'em. No nonsense about li'l Leil'. I just love Leil'—perf'ly honor'ble love. I'd do anything in worl' for her—or you—or ol' broth' Bay'd. Tell him'at, will you, like a goo' li'l girl."

"Watch out!" Daphne cried. "There's a railroad crossing! And look—a train's coming. Stop!"

"Stop for nothin'. No nassy ol' Long Island train goin' stop this li'l car o' mine!"

"But the gates are down. In heaven's name, stop!"

She was afraid to put out her hand to the wheel, and she did not know how to shut off the power. The madman at the wheel nudged her with his elbow and hooted the horn at the speeding train which shrieked back a warning. The gateman ran forward waving his

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flag and yelling. It was too late to stop.

Wetherell cried: "Low bridge! Duck pretty heads, ev'body. Whoopee!"

They smote the long arms of the barrier with a splitting sound like a sudden lightning. There was a rain of splinters, a crackle of glass in the windshield, a pounding of clubs, and they were through.

Then they crossed the tracks, bumping and jouncing. Daphne and Leila clung to each other, and stared into the blinding headlight of the locomotive, heard the clangor of its bell, and the scream of the brakes.

They did not know whether they were alive or dead. Then the opposite barrier confronted them, bent, cracked, split, splintered, pounded. Then the smooth road slipped under them again.

The train shot on its way with its gleaming windows and its bell wailing in diminuendo. Cool darkness resumed possession, and their hearts beat in an anguish of relief.

Now Leila cried raucously: "Stop this car, at once, you fool, you beast! and let me out."

"Don't you care, li'l girl. Nothing can harm us. I wont let anything harm you. Remember this car bears a sharmed life. Fear not, pilot, you carry Shee-zhar!"

Leila was scared beyond dignity. She wept and called for Bayard. She feared to face such risk in company with this outlaw against her duty and all the duties of the world.

"I want to go home," she sobbed, and turning into Daphne's arms, sobbed on her shoulder. Daphne grew furious. She felt now that she had justified her presence here. She held Leila fast in her embrace and commanded Wetherell: "Slow down at once! Do you hear! Slow down this car!"

Wetherell laughed: "Bless li'l heart. I'm goin' take you home. You're quite shafe with me—quite. Man that's born to be hanged never drown or get automokilled—that's good word—automokilled—eh what?"

Daphne could think of nothing to do. The car sped so swiftly that it would be certain death to try to leap out. It was useless to call for help to the cars that thundered by like flaming projectiles invisible behind their own searchlights.

For a mile or two they ran through dreaming scenery in which they were the only unpeaceful thing. Wetherell grew quieter now, but very sad. He was weeping softly, and mumbling over his disgrace, and repenting his life, promising that after this he would run straight and be honest and poor. He was afraid he could never go back to his country, and he kept sighing "England, my England!"

Then the thought of his treason, or the appearance and accusation of it, infuriated him and he sent his own fury into the car.

They whipped round a somber jut in the road, and his searchlight painted in white outlines against the black world a wagonload of sleepy children returning from some village church affair. They were singing drowsily, "Merrilee we row-lalong-row-la-long."

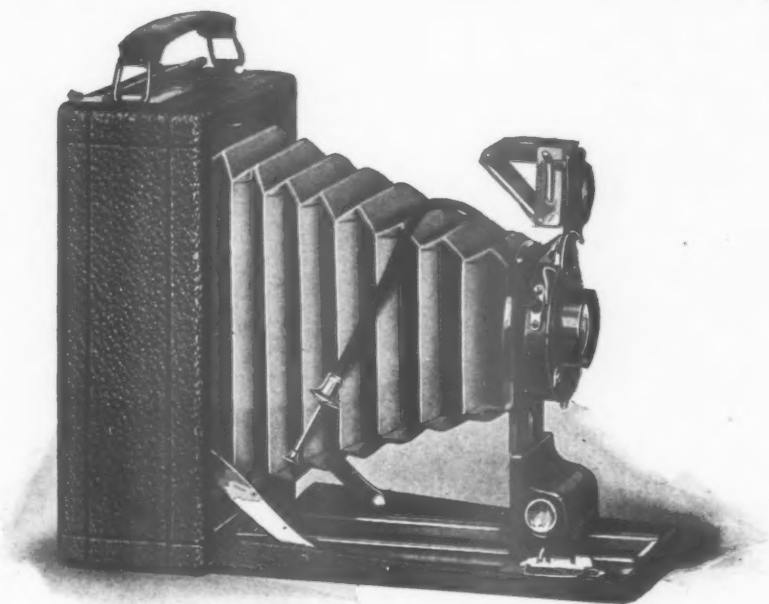
Daphne and Leila seemed to die at once. Wetherell groaned: "Oh, my God, the li'l chil'ren!"

He sounded his horn, set his brakes. The startled driver turned to see and drew the horses right across the road. There was nothing for Wetherell to do but what he did.

He spun his wheel and drove his thunderbolt into an open concrete culvert. There was a furious racket. The car turned a somersault and crumpled in a shuddering mass.

Wetherell, pinioned under the wheel, was knocked this way and that, and his head cracked on the concrete like a china doll's. Leila was snatched from the car as if invisible hands caught her exquisite body to flog a telephone pole with, then threw her into the ditch. Daphne was flung and shaken and thrust under the car when it turned over. And then the gasoline spilled from the shattered tank and caught fire.

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